WHAT DID JESUS REALLY TEACH ABOUT WAR?

EDWARD LEIGH PELL

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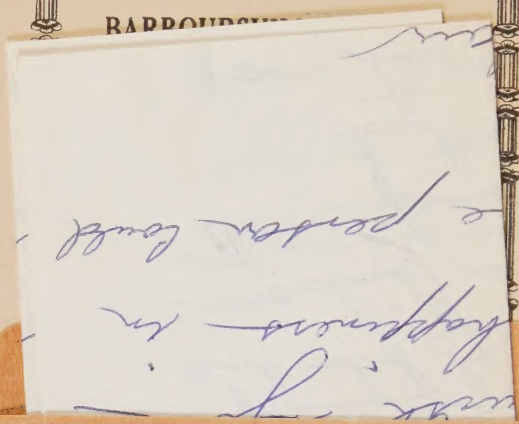

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BY

EDWARD LEIGH PELL

Author of
"Our Troublesome Religious Questions," etc.

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PREFACE

WE shall not win this war until it gets on our conscience. We may end it, but that is another matter. It was on our conscience once —the violation of Belgium put it there— but somehow it slipped off—how or why we need not now inquire. And it has never gotten back.

I was saying as much to a friend of mine the other day when he interrupted me. "Yes," he said warmly, "but it is getting back. I was at that great mass-meeting Sunday and I never saw such——"

I knew the rest. It was indeed a wonderful meeting. There was a great talk and a great collection and a tremendous burst of enthusiasm that lifted us straight up to the third heaven. But when it was over people went away saying, "Yes, we've got to do it. We must whip them over there or we shall have to whip them over here."

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Undoubtedly the war has gotten on America's sensibilities, but it is not on her conscience. Only here and there does one meet a man who is doing his "bit" with a sense of exaltation, as one who has heard in that awful cry for help the voice of his own kin; as one who has had a vision of Christ's tender compassion for the oppressed or of Christ's blasting indignation against the oppressor.

It does not take much to win some wars. A war for territory may be won by a foolish illusion that will send a people forward under the compulsion of what they believe to be an economic necessity. But a war for the right can only be won by an awakening of conscience that will send a people forward under the compulsion of a high moral obligation.

America has many needs, but I can conceive of nothing more urgent in the present crisis than a vision of the face of Him in whose presence no conscience has ever been able to sleep.

E. L. P.

Richmond, Va.

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I

HIS WORDS IN THE LIGHT OF HIS SOUL

FOR mental fatigue I try a walk in the woods; but for mental tangles I like a walk down the street. The street is better than the woods, for you cannot go many blocks without meeting Life; and in the matter of untangling things, Life, I have found, is as gifted as a deft-fingered woman.

The other day as I wandered through an obscure part of the town I came upon a game little rascal perched upon the stomach of a big, fat, blubbering coward. The youngster remained upon his soft seat until the situation ceased to be interesting and then sprang to his feet. The big boy slowly picked himself up, brushed his clothes and started off without a word. The little rascal gazed after the retreating

figure a moment, then sprang after it, seized it by the collar, threw it backward to the ground and sat upon it again. Three times while I stood near, that pathetic figure picked itself up, brushed its clothes and started off; and three times the little fellow sprang after it, seized it by the collar, threw it backward to the ground and sat upon it. When I left—

Do I mean to say that I left those boys to themselves?

I do. I left without a word. I wanted to do something but I could think of nothing. I can think of nothing now. What could I have done? The little fellow did not need my help and what the big one needed only Heaven could bestow. Besides, I was sick. I was sick at the stomach.

It occurred to me afterwards that my stomach may have done that big, fat, blubbering boy an injustice. How did I know that he was not too fat to fight? I have seen boys that were too fat to fight.

Also nations.

But my stomach revolted all the same.

Afterwards I asked myself what Jesus

would have done. It was a puzzling question and I soon began to look for an easier one. I asked myself how Jesus would have felt. That was easier—much easier. I could answer that. I was as sure as I had ever been sure of anything that I knew exactly how he would have felt.

And then I became sure of something else. I had been thinking of this war question and now I was thinking of it again, and I noticed that I was looking at it from another angle. And one angle at least had disappeared. . . .

So far as we know, Jesus never discussed the war question. I do not mean that he has left us no light upon it. He has left us a great deal of light upon it. But he did not discuss it. When you come to think of it there was no reason why he should discuss it. He could do better: he could settle it. And he did settle it.

Not merely nor mainly by what he said, but by what he was.

The Man that was behind his words settled it. . . .

It is amazing what a mess we have made of some of the Master's teachings. Not long ago I was startled by the shouting headlines of an evening paper proclaiming that Lloyd-George had announced that peace was in sight. There was a blissful time when I could easily take all headlines at their face value; but the age of innocence is long since passed, and I had little difficulty in restraining my feelings until I could get beyond the reporter's general version of what was said down to the premier's own exact words. From the headlines I had a right to expect that Lloyd-George had made an announcement either that victory was at hand or that the war powers had come to an understanding; but when I got into the body of the article I found that he had made no announcement at all. He was talking to a company of Americans and he was in a great blaze of enthusiasm. Now that America had come to the help of the allies, victory, he declared, was sure; and in a fervid climax he shouted, "I can see peace coming!" That was all.

The enterprising newspaper man who

interpreted this very innocent and uncalculating prophetic vision of peace as an official announcement that the war was about to end, did no greater violence to the words of Lloyd-George than our American pacifists have been doing to the words of Jesus ever since the great war began. In such times as these when reason is always wabbling upon its throne, one does not have to be an expert casuist to make things mean what one wants them to mean. If there is no chance to pack the jury one only needs to stir up enough feeling to becloud the issue. That will do quite as well.

If a committee composed of men who wish to misjudge me should be appointed to find out just how I stand on certain moral questions, I should know in advance just what they were going to do. I should know that they were going to examine my words, not to find out the truth, but to find support for the verdict which they had already adopted. And I should know the method they would pursue. They would take such words of mine as they chose out of their setting, arrange them

to suit their purpose and insist upon interpreting them literally. And they would confine themselves to my words: they would not so much as take a look at *me*. They would not ask a word about my reputation, much less my character; they would not want to know anything about my life; they would not care a fig about my thoughts, motives or the inmost desires of my soul. They would only ask what I said, and then they would isolate my words and hold me to their literal meaning, utterly regardless of the circumstances under which they were uttered or of the spirit that was evidently behind them. If they wanted to show, for instance, that I believed in the enslavement of women they would bring forward certain foolish remarks concerning militant suffragists which I had made on sundry occasions, perhaps with humorous intent. If they wanted to show that I believed in lynching they would recall the fact that I once declared that Villa ought to be shot. If they wanted to condemn me as an unfeeling brute they would bring out the number of times I had refused to give

pennies to street beggars who smoke cigars. In the end they would make me out a very bad man.

If I should be dissatisfied with their verdict, as I undoubtedly would be, and should ask for another hearing, and my case should be referred to a committee of partial friends, I should know what methods they would adopt also. They would adopt the very same methods that were used by my enemies, except that they would interpret all my objectionable utterances figuratively instead of literally. They would show, for instance, that my foolish remarks against the feminist movement were really very cleverly constructed compliments (metaphorical of course) of a most rare, delicate and chivalrous type.

Frankly, I would just as soon fall into the hands of my enemies as into the hands of my partial friends. My enemies would make me out a knave, but my partial friends would make me out a fool. And that would be quite as bad. There is only one way in which a man can find out how I really stand on any question: he must take my words on that question in con-

nection with their surroundings and he must take them in connection with *me*. He must not only know my utterances but he must know the spirit that uttered them. No man can rightly interpret my words regardless of my spirit, and I have no right to attempt to interpret another man's words regardless of his spirit.

All this ought to go without saying; yet for a thousand years and more when the friends of Jesus have undertaken to find out how he stood on a given question they have usually forgotten the obligations both of partial friends and of impartial truthseekers and insisted upon examining his words by methods which no one but an enemy would be expected to employ.

There is no light like the light of the human eye, but if you wanted light you would not go to an eye hospital and bring home a pocketful of eyes that have been plucked from their sockets. There are a few sayings of Jesus which are as complete in themselves as the stars that shine by their own light; but most of his sayings are like eyes: the moment you take them out of their sockets the light is gone.

Yet for a thousand years and more we Christians have been trying to get at the mind of our Master by pulling his words out of their sockets and examining them under the microscope as isolated units.

We might have been better employed in trying to solve the problem of the universe by throwing a hatful of A B C blocks into the air and spelling out the results as they fell to the floor.

To know how Jesus stands on this war question we must go beyond his words. We are not to pass by them, but we must go beyond them. We must go beyond them to their surroundings, and then we must go straight through them to the soul that is behind them. We must go straight through them to the Master himself.

If Christ should come among us today and we should look into his face I am sure we should have no difficulty in deciding where he stood. We would no longer examine his words as isolated units: we would listen to them as they came one after another from his lips. We would listen to them as they came up out of his soul.

We should not need to ask him how he felt about that big, fat, blubbering coward lying in the street. We should not be puzzled to know what he would do if he should come upon a beastly fellow in the act of beating the life out of his neighbor's child; if he should meet a group of fat, smug hypocrites dragging after them a weeping woman who had been taken in sin; if he should overhear a brutal Iscariot sneer at a loving Mary for anointing her Master's feet; if he should drop in at a church where men were making a pretense of worshipping God for gain; if he should happen in at a king's court, or a sweat-shop, or a broker's office, or a military camp where a tyrant was literally or figuratively grinding his heel into the face of a prostrate fellow man.

We should know what he would do. And we should know it not because we had just looked into what he said on one occasion about turning the other cheek, but because we were looking into his face.

Take the words of Jesus which seem to bear on this war question out of their setting—take them apart from the general

tenor of his teaching, apart from his mind and heart and life, apart from himself, and they have no more light in them than eyeballs torn out of their sockets or electric-light bulbs disconnected from the wires. It is only when we make connection between the Man and his words that the light comes. And in that light—the light that comes from the Man himself—there is no longer any doubt. The Man himself—the Man who came to rescue human beings from the low habitations of brutes and lead them to the heights of manhood in the kingdom of God; the Man who knew that if human beings did not achieve manhood after the divine pattern according to their divine destiny the world would go to the scrapheap and the kingdom of God would be without inhabitants; the Man who looked upon human beings not only with infinite pity for their weakness and cowardice, but with infinite longing to lift them out of their weakness and cowardice to his own heroic height; the Man whose indignation against the oppressor was only surpassed by his compassion for the oppressed; the Man who

steadfastly refused to lift a finger for his selfish interests, yet never hesitated to throw himself into the breach for others—that Man has settled this war question forever.

II

THE LETTER THAT KILLETH

IN his walks abroad Jesus was always followed by a crowd. It was a terribly hungry crowd. Now and then he would turn and speak to them and his words would be as the handful of corn which the farmer throws out now and then to toll his pigs along. They would follow him all day if he would only give them a word now and then. Sometimes his sayings would melt their hearts; sometimes they would pierce them; sometimes they would confuse them; but they would take everything he gave them and follow on for more.

One day he suddenly turned about and with a severity which must have startled them said:

"If a man cometh unto me and hateth not his own father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters,

yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple."

It was a horrible speech. At least so it would have sounded in our ears. If a teacher of a new religion should utter such a sentiment before an American audience today he would be hissed off the platform. If the people who listened to Jesus that day had listened with our ears they would have done worse. They would have fairly howled with rage. They would have cast dust into the air. They would have thrown stones at him. They would have cursed him as a blasphemer; for in their minds reverence for parents was inseparable from reverence for God.

But they were Orientals and they listened with Oriental ears. And because they listened with Orientals ears nothing happened. As the last word fell from his lips he turned and went on his way, and the multitude followed on quietly as before.

No doubt his severity had startled them, but they were not worried. They were not worried because they knew how to take him. They had heard him before.

They had looked into his face before. Time and again they had caught a glimpse of his soul; and when you once get a glimpse of a man's soul you will interpret his words by what you see in his soul and not take them as they appear on their faces. And in their Teacher's soul they had never seen anything but love. They knew that he loved everybody and they knew that if there was anything in the world that he hated it was hate. He would not even let them hate their enemies. He even demanded that they should love their enemies. It was impossible to conceive that he would have them hate their own fathers and mothers. Whatever he might mean, he could not mean that.

And that was not all. They not only knew what he did not mean but they knew what he did mean. Being Orientals they were accustomed to speeches of that sort. They talked that way themselves. They had to talk that way. Everybody in the East talks that way today. Everybody talks in pictures, especially pictures of violent and startling contrasts. It is the only way you can make yourself under-

stood. If I wanted to impress an American with the height of the mountains near my home I would give the exact figures; but if I were talking to a Syrian I would give him no figures at all: I would only give him a figure of speech. I would point to his little mountains and I would say: "Ah! you should see *my* mountains. Those little hills yonder are mere holes in the ground." And he would understand. If I should say that my mountains rise ten thousand feet above the level of the sea it would mean nothing to him at all.

And so when Jesus told the crowd that day that if a man hated not his father and mother he could not be his disciple, they knew what he was trying to do. They knew that he was simply trying to impress upon them an important teaching by means of a picture of violent and startling contrasts. And the moment they looked upon the picture they saw what it meant. They saw a man so bent upon following his teacher that he was even willing to renounce his own father and mother. It did not suggest hate; it only suggested devotion—wonderful devotion. And so

they knew that what the Master was thinking about was not how they should feel toward their fathers and mothers, but how they should feel toward *him*. He was not thinking of hate at all; he was thinking of love. And they knew that what he meant was not that they must hate others, but that they must love him and that they must love him supremely. "Unless you put me before all things; unless I am everything to you, you cannot be my disciple."

And they did not worry. They no more worried over it than an Oriental bridegroom would worry over his bride's threat to kill herself if he did not hate all the women in the world except herself.

Nor do we worry over it today. Literal as we Americans are, we never have any difficulty over this saying except in our childhood. In childhood it horrifies us, but as soon as we are old enough to fall in love we begin to take it as a matter of course. We know that it is something about love and we still have sense enough to except the language of love from literal interpretation. We talk business as

Occidentals, but we still talk love as Orientals. And when one speaks of love with what men call Oriental extravagance we understand. We know that our literal speech was made for such ideas as black is black and two *plus* two equals four, and that love can no more be expressed in literal terms than heaven can be pictured in red and gold. When a man says that two *plus* two equals four we know that he is speaking in the language of science, which is Occidental, not Oriental, and we interpret his words accordingly. When he speaks of love we know that he is using the language of love, which is Oriental and not Occidental, and we interpret his words accordingly. We no more think of putting a literal interpretation upon a bride's threat to kill herself if her husband ever looks at another woman than we would place a figurative interpretation upon the notice from the bank that our account is overdrawn, and must be made good before three o'clock. For a like reason we no more think of placing a literal interpretation upon Christ's startling saying about hating father and mother than

we would think of placing a figurative interpretation upon his flat declaration that he must suffer many things and be killed and be raised again the third day.

With this hard saying before us it is as plain as the sun that we can no more get at the mind of Jesus by interpreting his words apart from himself than we can get at the mind of anybody else by interpreting his words apart from himself. We never think of cutting a friend's words loose from his mind, his spirit, his life, and interpreting them by themselves. My words are as much a part of myself as the hairs of my head, and I feel that I have a right to demand that such hairs as I have shall be judged by the way they look on my head and not by the way they would look in the clutch of a baby's fist. If I am told that my friend Wilkins in a speech the other night gave utterance to a very heartless sentiment, I do not take his reported saying into a laboratory and analyze it by itself. The fact is I don't try to analyze it at all. I simply put it in Wilkins's lips (mentally of course) and take a good look at Wilkins. I look at

the corners of his mouth to see if he is joking. Then I look at his eyes. Then I look through his eyes down into his soul. If I cannot get a good view of his soul I think a little while about what I know of his life and character. I remember that there never was a man with a bigger heart than Wilkins. And then I decide that whatever Wilkins may have meant, certainly he did not mean what his words say when taken by themselves. And I refuse to take them by themselves. It is impossible for me to take my friend's words literally if his literal words give the lie to all that I know of his life and character.

I do not even treat a stranger's words that way. If a man sitting near me on the car gives utterance to a rather violent sentiment I do not immediately conclude that he is an anarchist. I must at least glance at the corners of his mouth to see if he is joking.

As a rule it is only when we are out of humor and want to misjudge people, or want to have our way to prove our point, that we insist upon taking their words according to the letter and not according to

the spirit. Indeed I can think of but one exception. That exception, strange to say, is where the words we want to interpret happen to be the words of Jesus. Aside from that horrible saying about hating father and mother and two or three other hard sayings, we usually feel that we must take his words literally whether we are in a bad humor or not. . . .

With this horrible saying before our eyes we know perfectly well that it is the letter that killeth and the spirit that giveth life; yet the moment we turn from it we forget and fall back into our old habit of saying that when Jesus commanded us to turn the other cheek he must have meant exactly what he said or nothing. We can read that if a man hate not his father or mother he cannot be "my disciple" and still know that we are his disciples, though we love our fathers and mothers dearly; but when we come to the passage about turning the other cheek, both cheeks turn pale and we close the Bible with a sigh and spend the rest of the day wondering whether it is worth while to try to be a

Christian at all, especially in war times. We simply cannot turn the other cheek and we do not see how we can be Christians until we do. And we do not see how we can be Christians if we don't. We know that if we do there will no longer be any manhood in us, and we know that Jesus came to transform human beings into men; and certainly we cannot be men if we have no manhood. And there we are!

It is pathetic. . . .

When the pacifist lecturer told his intelligent Christian audience that Christ's command to turn the other cheek meant exactly what it said or it meant nothing, half the intelligent Christians in the audience dropped their heads for shame. If they had had a Christian badge on their breasts I fancy they would have unpinned it and slipped it into their pockets. Nobody thought of that hard saying about hating father and mother. Nobody thought of asking why the lecturer insisted that they should take it literally. Nobody ventured to suggest that if it was

taken in any other way he would have no way to prove his point. Nobody thought of asking whether the saying taken literally would harmonize with the general tenor of Christ's teaching, his spirit, his life. Nobody thought to ask where Jesus would find men for his kingdom if his own followers should renounce their manhood for a yellow streak. Nobody ever thought to ask whether Jesus himself ever turned the other cheek.

One wonders why.

What is the meaning of this depressing, helpless feeling that comes over us every time we are told that we must take the words of Jesus literally? One wonders how often we have asked this question and then hurried on as if we were afraid somebody would answer it. For my part I should really like to know. I should like to know why so many good people feel like culprits whenever they read that part of the Sermon on the Mount that seems to tell us that we should not resist evil but should turn the other cheek. I should like to know why we find it so hard to rid ourselves of this horrible suspicion that we

are neither brave nor honest or we would obey the commands of Jesus literally. It cannot be because he has told us to take his words literally. He has told us no such thing. Can it be because it has been so often and so solemnly affirmed in our hearing that the man who refuses to take the words of Jesus literally is a coward? Has it gotten on our nerves?

III

THE SPIRIT THAT GIVETH LIFE

OUR modern civilization has given us some strange ideals. For a hundred years and more the world's ideal Christian has been a dear, saintly old lady with a pale face and thin, blue-veined hands who spends most of her time sitting in an easy-chair with her Bible in her lap trying to think of kind things to say about the devil, and occasionally protesting in a gentle voice and with graceful diction against the cruel custom of killing flies. We never question that ideal because it is a man's picture of his mother in her old age; and a man's picture of his mother in her old age is not open to question.

I do not know whether we got our modern picture of Christ from this ideal or not —I rather think we did; but the two pictures are wonderfully alike. For a hun-

dred years and more millions of people have been thinking of Jesus as a dear, saintly, harmless soul, of quiet mien and gentle speech, who likes to think up kind things to say about the devil and who never protests against anything except the cruel custom of killing flies.

This is the Christ of our Sunday afternoon dreams.

The Christ of history was the bravest fighter the world has ever known.

I do not say that he was not gentle and kind and tender-hearted. I have seen some gentle and kind and tender-hearted women who were tremendous fighters. And Jesus, though the gentlest and kindest and most tender-hearted of men, was a tremendous fighter.

I do not like to think of him as a warrior, but he began his life-work by declaring war against the literalists, and he fought them until his back was against the cross.

There are glimpses of this war all the way through the gospel story. We know how it came about. He had come to rescue men from the depths of sin and to lift

them up into the kingdom of God where they might achieve their divine destiny as sons of God. He had found his own people in double bondage. They were bound not only by sin but by tyrants. We usually think of them as being in bondage to Rome; but the yoke which Rome had put upon them was a trifle compared with that which had been bound upon them by their own teachers. Rome had subjugated the country as a whole, but the rabbis had subjugated the people—man by man. Long before Jesus came the rabbis had lost their spiritual vision and become literalists. When a religious teacher loses his spiritual vision he usually becomes a literalist. There is nothing else he can become except an apostate. And being an apostate is not so pleasant as remaining in the faith, so long as one is allowed to teach according to the letter and not according to the spirit. And the rabbis had followed the lines of easiest resistance. Having lost their spiritual vision, and being no longer able to look beneath the letter of the law to its spirit, they had contented themselves with looking on the out-

ward appearance, and they had revised their teaching accordingly.

When a religious teacher has nothing left but the letter of the law he usually develops an extraordinary zeal for it, and this invariably makes him a tyrant. And the rabbis, with certain notable and noble exceptions, had become tyrants. The rabbi of our own day treats his people as brothers; but if we can give any credence to history the average rabbi of Christ's day treated his people as oxen. And the people of Christ's day, being too weak after centuries of fiery trial to choose their own paths, quietly submitted their necks to the yoke that was held out to them and consumed in silence such fodder as their masters chose to set before them.

Let us not discuss the fodder. That subject is too pathetic. All we need to remember is that for centuries the rabbis had been piling up their literal interpretations around the law until the law itself was now almost entirely hidden from view, and that this great mass of literal interpretations was to the law as chaff to wheat. This is not the whole truth, but

it is not necessary to remember more. The whole truth is worse: the mass was not only as chaff; it was chaff and the chaff was full of poisonous weeds.

Feed a people on the mere letter of God's law and you will soon reduce them to spiritual starvation: and when they have been well starved you can put a chain about their necks and lead them whither you will. That was what the rabbis had done and when Jesus came they were leading the people about, as I have said, like dumb oxen.

And they were leading them in utter darkness. They had put out the lamp which heaven had let down to them. They had made the truth of God a lie. They had deprived the law of its soul. They had deprived righteousness of its meaning; black had become white, and religion had been turned into a shrewd device, designed to enable power-loving rabbis to hold a man by the ear with one hand while playing tricks with his conscience with the other.

It was plain to Jesus that he could never reach the chains of sin which bound

his people's hearts until he had broken the chains of tyranny which bound their minds, and the moment he succeeded in winning the ear of the people he set to work to rescue them from their tyrants. And then the war began. It was a bloodless fight until just before the end, but it was one of the fiercest fights the world has ever seen. We like to think of those wonderful years as beautiful years in which the Prince of Peace went softly about in the holy calm of vespers, cooling fevered brows, healing broken hearts and blessing little children. But the ministry of Jesus was not like that. It was rather like the fiery trial of a man whose house is beset by a pack of wolves, and who is trying to feed his hungry children and save them from the hungry beasts at the same time. How strange that we should have put aside all those wonderful pictures of Christ the Hero throwing himself into the breach for his oppressed people and have chosen to remember him only as he looked in the midst of his tender ministrations of mercy to the needy! How strange that we should have forgotten those terrible

moments of single-handed conflict with that hungry pack of wolves, the tyrannical Pharisees, who through all his ministry were either hanging upon the outskirts of the crowd or howling at his heels! . . .

All through that terrible struggle to rescue his people from the grip of the rabbis the Master concentrated his fire upon literalism and the externalism and hypocrisy which invariably attend it. I do not recall a single conflict with the Pharisees in the presence of his people in which he did not try to disarm his antagonists, either by showing the people how literalism made the truth of God a lie or by pointing out to them its deadly fruits—externalism and hypocrisy—as shown in the lives of the Pharisees themselves. In a hundred ways he tried to show them how the rabbis, by conforming themselves to the letter of the law, not only took the force out of many of the Father's commands, but often put into his law commands which he never thought of giving and which were utterly abhorrent to his spirit. "It is utterly wrong!" we can

hear him saying. "It is not the letter that counts but the spirit. God looks not on the outward appearance but upon the heart. If you look only upon the outward appearance of the law you will look only upon the outward appearance of your lives and you will become like your teachers. And then—

"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which outwardly appear beautiful, but inwardly are full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness." . . .

And now we come to one of the most amazing facts in the history of human folly. After all his terrific battles against the letter that killeth and in behalf of the spirit that giveth life, the bravest and most persistent antagonist of literalism the world ever saw is still quoted by his own people in this year of grace and light as —a literalist!

And most of the quotations are from his Sermon on the Mount, the most powerful protest against literalism ever uttered.

Aside from their appeal to our greed

for material comfort the most powerful weapons used by the pacifists to reduce this nation to the bondage of selfishness are two kindred sayings cut out of this wonderful sermon against literalism and used as isolated and literal statements to show how vehemently Jesus opposed war. These sayings are:

"Whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also." And—

"Resist not evil."

These two sayings, which somehow flash like swords above the heads of the audience in every pacifistic onslaught even when they do not issue from the lips of the lecturer himself, have undoubtedly wrought greater slaughter, especially among the elect, than all their other weapons combined. Yet if we would only deprive them of their literal interpretation and put them back into their places long enough to take a look at their surroundings, we should quickly see that if they were taken in their true sense they would be of no more use as weapons in the hands of a pacifist than a couple of roses.

What was Jesus talking about?

If somebody should tell me of a very unreasonable remark which my friend Jones made the other day in his presence, that would be the first thing I should want to know. I should want to know what Jones was talking about. If that did not settle the matter I should want to know what mood he was in. Or if it should occur to me that Jones was especially apt at metaphors and frequently indulged in them I might ask whether he was talking in a plain, literal way or indulging, as he so often did, in figures of speech. I think too much of Jones to take him literally when I know that such an utterance taken literally would condemn him as a very unreasonable man. I have known Jones a long time and I know he is not an unreasonable man.

Suppose it had been my fortune to spend a year with Jesus in Galilee. And suppose some time after that wonderful experience a friend should come to me and say: "I heard the Master utter a very hard saying the other day. He told us that if a man should strike you on one cheek you

ought to turn the other." What would I say?

If I were a literalist I should say:

"Are you sure those were his very words? Very well: then I am going to do exactly as he commanded. The next time a man strikes me on one cheek I am going to turn the other."

But not being a literalist I should not decide the matter so quickly. It would not be sufficient for me to know that those were his very words. Those words taken in their literal sense don't sound like him. I know that if a man should smite me on one cheek and I should turn the other it would only add fuel to the fire. And the Master, I am sure, does not want us to add fuel to such a fire. Besides I know that if I should turn the other cheek I would turn my back upon my manhood, and I know that that could not please him. Why, he came to lift us to the highest manhood, and I can think of nothing that would stir his indignation so much as the sight of a man laying aside his manhood and leaving only a yellow streak.

And so I should have to go further. I

should have to know what he was talking about and I should have to know the spirit in which those words were uttered. And so I should say to my friend:

"Indeed! But he could not have meant it literally, for the Master always practiced what he preached; and you know *he* never turned the other cheek. Suppose we apply his own law of interpretation."

And I should insist upon knowing what the Master was talking about.

Suppose we should insist upon it today. What would we learn?

We would learn that Jesus was talking about that horrible law of retaliation. That law was not so horrible at the time it was made, but the hate that blinds men had gradually turned it into an instrument of vengeance, and Jesus hated vengeance. He hated the revengeful spirit. Retaliation was a horribly brutal thing that must be ruled out of the hearts of men, whatever the cost. He had come into a world of brothers—the Father made men to be brothers—and he had found those brothers demanding an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. It was hor-

rible. It made his spirit boil every time he thought of it. It was impossible for him to speak of it without indignation. "What?" I can hear him saying, "What? An eye for an eye? And *you* the children of the Father? You want an eye for an eye? You want to retaliate like the heathen? What are you thinking about? You want to strike back just for revenge? Perish the thought! Why, you are destroying yourself when you strike back for revenge. Better endure any insult rather than strike back for revenge. Better let your enemy spit on you. Better turn the other cheek. Anything is better than revenge."

And that was all. Not a word was said about whether there might be circumstances under which a man or a nation might strike back or not. All that he said was that a man has no right to strike back for revenge. Unquestionably the saying applies against all wars for revenge and all indulgence in the spirit of retaliation in war, but it cannot be quoted against war in general. It has nothing whatever to do with the question of war in general.

But did not Jesus say, "Resist not evil"? And isn't that sweeping enough? Doesn't that include all sorts of wars?

One is tempted to reply that if it includes all sorts of wars we have no right to make an exception in favor of the fierce war which our pacifist friends have been waging with all the forces at their command during the last three years; but that would be beside the point. Taken apart from its surroundings and taken literally this solemn command of Jesus unquestionably teaches nonresistance. Taken literally it means that it is the duty of Christians to sit down and fold their hands and submit without protest of any sort to every evil thing that may come upon them, including burglars, impostors, grafters, impecunious friends seeking another loan, saloon-keepers soliciting our votes and (incidentally) our boys, merciless automobilists, tainted meats, weeds in the corn, mosquitoes, pirates, pestilence and war. Taken literally it means that if we want to be true followers of Jesus we must stop trying to follow in his steps (for we cannot follow him without his own heroic

spirit) and sneak off to some secluded spot where there is no fighting to do and where piously inclined souls can spend their days in such harmless and comforting diversions as singing Psalms and playing peekaboo with the children. Taken literally it means that the ideal hero of the kingdom of heaven is not the Man of Galilee, but that big, fat, blubbering non-resister whom I found that day lying in the street with a little game rascal perched upon his stomach. Taken literally it means that we should not try to be like the Master, for he was the greatest resister of evil the world has ever seen. He came into the world to rescue men from their worst enemies and he fought to the last. The fact that he did not use physical force (I shall discuss that matter further on) does not alter the fact that he fought. He was just as truly a fighter as Moses, Joshua, David, Washington, Lee or the fighting parsons of the gold-fever days of the far West. And he used force.

But it is evident that we cannot take that saying by itself. We must ask what

Jesus was talking about. And when we have looked into the matter we shall find that he was talking about the very same thing he was discussing when he commanded us to turn the other cheek. He was talking about that abominable spirit of retaliation, and he was saying that a man has no right to do anything—not even to resist evil—in a spirit of revenge.

A follower of Jesus has many privileges, but he must be ready to die rather than retaliate, just as he must be ready to die rather than steal.

IV

THE SPIRIT BACK OF OUR DEEDS

I HAVE called it the Master's own law of interpretation; but it did not originate with him: as a matter of fact it is as old as the hills. Ages before Jesus came the world had become conscious of the existence of a law of interpretation that was wholly unlike its own. Everybody who had any spiritual vision at all could see that there was a vast difference between man's way of looking at things and God's. "Man looketh on the outward appearance, but Jehovah looketh on the heart." That had always been God's way. He had never judged things by the way they looked on the surface: he had always gone straight down to the heart of things. And everybody could see that God's way was right. But it is

pleasanter to the flesh to look at the outside than to make one's way down to the heart of things, and it is human to go on doing the pleasanter thing. Apparently it was not until Jesus came and made men see the peril and folly of judging according to the letter that the world began to wake up to the necessity of adopting God's plan.

Perhaps no teacher ever had so clear a vision of this necessity as Jesus. At any rate he urged it upon men with an emphasis which no teacher had ever used before. And he was as persistent as he was emphatic. He was not always talking about it but he was always using it. He not only applied it to the law of God: he applied it to his own words as well. When an ill-humored crowd insisted upon placing a literal interpretation upon a remark which he had made about giving them his flesh to eat, he gave them to understand that they must interpret his words not according to the letter, but according to the spirit. "It is the spirit that giveth life: the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I have spoken unto you are spirit, and are

life." And he not only applied it to his words: he applied it to his conduct. If his followers chose to judge him by his overt acts, as the Pharisees did, they would no doubt make him out a very bad man, as the Pharisees did. He would be no better in their sight than the publicans and sinners with whom he ate.

And he went still further. He applied it to all human conduct. Men cannot be safely judged by their overt acts. The moral value of conduct does not lie in the overt act, but in the spirit which prompts it. It is not what a man does, but the motive behind the deed, that counts. A man may obey the letter of the law as rigidly as the Pharisees and be as rotten as the Pharisees. A man may be as fair as a sepulchre in his outward conduct and as foul as a sepulchre in his heart. You cannot judge a man by what he does with his hands without first taking a good look at his heart. A Christian has no more right to judge men's deeds by the way they look on the surface regardless of the spirit that prompts them than he has to judge the words of Christ by the way they look on

the surface regardless of the spirit that is beneath them.

We cannot even judge men's wars, horrible as they are, by the way they look on the surface. If we must condemn them because they are horrible, then we must condemn some things which Jesus apparently approves and which we cannot well get along without.

Childbirth, for instance.

And surgical operations.

Some wars, indeed, we remember as childbirths. The American Revolution, for instance. And a few we remember as surgical operations.

I do not mean to say that according to the teaching of Jesus war is nothing more than a horror. Often it is a crime. In most cases, perhaps, it has been a crime on one side or the other. But I do mean to say that according to this particular teaching of Jesus we have no right to condemn war by its outward appearance. We have no more right to condemn a war because it is horrible than we have to condemn a surgical operation because it is horrible.

If I should spend ten minutes in an operating room and go away without a thought of what was in the minds and hearts of the surgeons whom I saw at work, I fancy I should go direct to the police station. And I should go boiling over with righteous rage. I should report that I had discovered an unspeakably horrible place inhabited by fiends who spend their time cutting men and women to pieces for the sheer hellish joy of it. If I could not stir up the police I should hurry over to the newspaper offices, and if I could not stir up the reporters I should go out on the streets and harangue the people. And I should not be satisfied until I had raised a mob that would not leave one stone of that hospital upon another. Fortunately for the public peace, as well as for my own comfort, I never go to a hospital without having my heart sufficiently stirred to enable me to look beneath the surface down to the heart of things, and when I come away, instead of rushing off to the police station, I usually go softly to my home devoutly thanking God for the wonderful compassion of the

Good Physician which found its way into the hearts of men and moved them to build hospitals.

If I had stood in a Belgian fortress during that unspeakable eruption of savagery three years ago and my mind and heart, for some strange reason, had failed to divine what was in the minds and hearts of the soldiers at the guns, I would have come away boiling with a rage against war that would never have died out so long as I had blood enough left to boil. Seeing only grim, death-dealing fighters and belching guns and exploding shells and vomiting volcanoes filling the air with a horrible chaos of hot and bleeding human flesh, I would have sworn in my frenzy that I had spent an eternity in hell and that every Belgian I saw was a demon. But if I had stood in the midst of that horror with my spiritual eyes open and had looked straight through it all down to the heart of things, down to the spirit that is back of things, I should have come away feeling that I had—

Well, I should not have felt that I had been in hell. Nor should I have felt like

calling those grim, death-dealing fighters demons.

A spiritual age judges things by the spirit that is back of them, and this habit increases its spiritual vision and its spiritual wealth. A materialistic age keeps its eyes fixed upon externals and as a consequence steadily loses in spiritual vision and wealth. The ancient habit of looking upon the outward appearance, which we have fallen into anew in the last generation, is destroying our spiritual wealth in ways we never dreamed of. We have lost the spiritual vision that can look beyond the freezing cold of winter, beyond the merciless March winds that stir the trees to their roots, beyond the boiling hot days of summer all the way to the golden autumn harvests. Therefore we cry out against the cold and the wind and the heat. We have lost the the vision to see beyond the horrors of the dissecting room to the rosy cheek of health. Therefore we cry out against the dissecting room. We have lost the vision to see beyond the parental rod to the strong, noble man who never forgets to thank God for the thrashings his

father gave him when he was a boy. Therefore we cry out against the parental rod. We can only see as far as the rod: we cannot even see through the father's eyes down into his breaking heart. We can only see enough to assure us that a big, cowardly bully is jumping on a poor little, defenseless boy. And because we cannot see farther, because we have not even the spiritual vision to see that the father who is whipping his boy is crucifying himself for his boy's sake, we break our rods and throw them away and leave our boys to go to the dogs and incidentally to break our hearts and throw them away.

A father looks up from his work to see his child playing on the track just as the fast express comes thundering round the bend. He reaches the little fellow just ahead of the locomotive and, springing across the track, thrusts him on before him. The child is thrown against the curb and his arm is broken; and a passing stranger, with the spiritual vision of a mummy, proceeds to honor the father's heroic deed by denouncing him to the gathering crowd as an unfeeling brute.

An age with such a vision may see through some things, but it cannot be expected to see through the smoke of battle to such ethereal visions beyond as the triumph of right, the overthrow of tyranny, the rescue of the oppressed, the recognition of the inviolability of small nations, the safety of democracy, the restoration of Belgium, or a victory for the principles of Christ that will secure to every man the right of manhood and a fair chance to achieve his divine destiny in the kingdom of God.

VI

THE THING THAT COUNTS WITH GOD

DOWN in a little Carolina town many years ago they were trying a man for murder. At the outset the judge had reminded the jury of the law which required them to keep together until they announced their verdict, and then, after the custom of the time, proceeded to lay it upon their consciences. Whatever happened—no matter if the heavens fell—they must keep together. If one of them should go to the bad place the rest were in duty bound to follow. They must keep together. The trial proceeded quietly until suddenly the fire bell rang out. It had been a long time since the oldest inhabitant had heard a fire alarm and the excitement became so intense that a juryman who was sitting by a window lost his head and—so the story goes—jumped to the ground two stories

below. Instantly the next man sprang after him and the next and the next, until eleven men had solemnly followed him at the risk of their lives in unquestioning obedience to the letter of the law.

Not all Pharisees have the courage of their convictions, but they all have the same convictions. If those Carolina jurymen had lived in Christ's day I fancy the rabbis would have crowned them (metaphorically, of course) with laurel wreaths and exalted them to the very highest seats at Abraham's table which they had not already reserved for themselves. A Pharisee is a religious man who has lost his spiritual vision and who, being oblivious of the spirit that is in things and behind things, is unconscious of any material difference between the ten commandments and the multiplication table.

When Christ came he found the Pharisees dealing with men's deeds as a modern accountant deals with figures. Twice two means what it says on the surface, and Thou shalt not kill meant what it said on the surface. All law was purely arbitrary. Things were right or wrong

simply because God had commanded or forbidden them, or because the rabbis of the past had commanded or forbidden them, which to their minds was practically the same thing. And as arbitrariness always begets arbitrariness the business of arbitrarily dividing deeds between the "Do" and "Don't" column went merrily on through the centuries without break. People wanted to know whether it was right or wrong to carry a needle around on the Sabbath, and when the Pharisees decided to put it down in the "Don't" column it became wrong. Whether a man carried a needle to show his contempt for the law against burden-bearing on the Sabbath or only took it over to a neighbor's to sew up a little fellow who had been gored by an ox was not material: having been put down in the "Don't" column it was wrong and that was the end of it.

The Pharisees, like the poor, we have always with us. A generation ago they were spending their time arbitrarily designating certain amusements as right and certain amusements as wrong. We re-

member them as gentlemen of honor and intelligence who were open to conviction provided it was undersood that the devil's favorite habitation is a woman's feet and that there is no material difference between the girl who dances in private with her brother and the girl who dances in public with a rake. For several years past they have been busy laying down arbitrary laws on the subject of fighting. We may fight to protect our individual property from a burglar, but we may not fight to protect the collective property of the American people from a pirate. We may put an end to a murderer by the slow process of life imprisonment, but not by the instantaneous process of electrocution. As individuals we may protect our lives with a gun, but as a people we must be content to protect our lives with a protest. We may fight our enemies with our tongues, but not with our fists. We may use moral force but not physical force. And so on.

If the Pharisees of Christ's day were right, then unquestionably the Pharisees of our own day are right. And unques-

tionably it is our duty to follow them. Unquestionably we should decide all these questions about fighting according to the way things look on the surface and to our own eyes, regardless of the condition of our vision and regardless of the spirit that is in things or back of them. If all fighting—individual or collective, physical, intellectual or moral—looks ugly to our eyes and makes us feel bad inside, we must set down all fighting as wrong and then sit down and let the mosquitoes eat us up, while fiends insult our wives and grind their heels in our children's faces. If all our manly instincts revolt at the spectacle of a bloody fist fight, but jump for joy at a war of words, then we should condemn bloody fist fighting and magnify the noble art of stabbing your neighbor in the back with a poisoned tongue.

But, on the other hand, if the Pharisees of Christ's day were wrong it would seem to follow that the Pharisees of our day are wrong. If we must judge a fight not by the way it looks on the surface, but by the spirit that prompts it, it would seem, at least to the ordinary mind, that we have

no more right to arbitrarily put this or that kind of fight in the "Do" or "Don't" column than we have a right to arbitrarily decide that two *plus* two equals five.

And deep down in our hearts we know that the Pharisees are wrong. If we are fighting we know perfectly well whether we are right or wrong, and we know it not by what is going on on the surface but by what is going on in our hearts. We know that the thing that counts with God is not what our fists are doing, but what our hearts are doing. If I were fighting to deliver a poor fellow from the hands of a cruel oppressor I would have a sense of exaltation as strong and pure as that which comes at the moment of supreme sacrifice; but if I should suddenly discover that I was not really concerned about the poor fellow at all, but had jumped on the oppressor because he was my enemy and I wanted to get even with him, my spirit would fall into the bottomless pit of degradation and shame.

It is not fighting that counts against us; it is the hating that is back of most of our fighting. To say that all fighting

is wrong because it is impossible to fight without hate is not only puerile, but it gives the lie to every noble character that has ever lived. History does not record, so far as I can recall, a single noble life that was not filled with fighting. I am sorry for the man who says he cannot fight without hate, just as I am sorry for the man who cannot punish a child until he gets "mad." Any brute can whip his child when he is mad: it takes a real man to whip his child when he is not beside himself. And it takes a real man to fight when there is not a trace of hate in his heart. A real man cannot fight without fire, but he can fight without hate. He must burn with wrath—wrath against wrong—but that is a different matter; a very different matter. . . .

The fact that many noble men have gone through life without the use of physical force proves nothing. They did not get through without fighting. And fighting, whether by physical, intellectual or moral force, is fighting. If Christ's law of interpretation is right the distinction

which the pacifist makes between physical force and other kinds of force is purely arbitrary. We have been treated to an immense amount of drivel on this point in recent years. Men who plunged into this fight against war with tongues as sharp as swords, and who have been slashing right and left with unseemly ferocity ever since, tell us that physical force is an unspeakably low and vile thing. Perhaps. I have known men—zealous apostles in what they honestly believed to be a noble cause—to use their physical tongues in ways that were unspeakably low and vile. But if fighting is to be judged, not by looking on the outward appearance, but by looking on the heart, the character of the force used is merely incidental. It makes no difference whether I fight a man or his principles or his nation with physical force or intellectual force or moral force: the right or wrong of it is determined not by the form of the force used, but by the spirit that is behind it. I might remark in passing that it is a little difficult to reconcile this recent talk about the savagery and vileness of physical

force with the evident sincerity with which the average American used to thank God for the sound thrashings his good Christian father gave him when he was a boy, and but for which he might not have been worth the rope it would take to hang him. For my own part I cannot find it in my heart to sneer at the only force available to the average man who is called to overcome brutality in an emergency. I cannot despise the power that God has given us to rescue women and children from the assaults of human fiends.

Physical force is an inferior force, but not in itself a vile force. It is the force in common use among vile men (who have nothing else to use), and it is often, very often, used in vile ways; but it is not a vile force. The fact that Jesus never used it proves nothing except that he never needed it. The fact that men who have reached the full stature of moral manhood rarely use it proves nothing except that they rarely need it. Jesus had no use for it for the simple reason that he had higher forces. He had great intellectual force, which in many cases was

fully adequate for his needs; and he had a spiritual force with which he held back the human wolves that were ever at his heels,—a force which could sweep the temple of its horde of greedy hypocrites with a word and hurl a howling mob backward to the ground with a glance.

If it is hard to conceive of Jesus using physical force, it is not because physical force is vile, but because we can hardly conceive of circumstances in which his higher powers would not have been available. Let a man of great moral stature speak to a bully who is choking a small boy to death, and ten to one the bully will scramble to his feet and sneak away like a humiliated cur. The average man does not find the problem so simple. Ten to one he will be compelled to jump on the bully and beat him into his senses. That does not mean that it is wrong to beat bullies into their senses. But it does mean that the average man has fallen pitifully short of his divine calling.

VI

BRINGING THE QUESTION CLOSER HOME

IF a man shoots at his neighbor with murderous intent and misses him, he is just as much a murderer as the man who shoots at his neighbor with murderous intent and kills him. That is the teaching of Jesus, and it is the teaching of conscience and common sense. For obvious reasons society cannot undertake to punish the man who misses as a murderer and it therefore makes a distinction; but this distinction is purely arbitrary. To say that a man is not guilty unless he succeeds in killing his neighbor is to make his innocence or guilt depend upon the accuracy of his aim or the condition of his cartridge. Jesus made it depend upon the condition of his heart.

If the Master is right—if it is true that the moral value of our conduct is to be found, not in our overt acts, but in the

spirit which prompts them—then it is high time we were tearing up our arbitrary lists of deeds that are right and deeds that are wrong and going back to conscience and common sense, both of which find their fullest expression in the words of Jesus.

In the light of this teaching of Jesus we shall find that there are no deeds which we can put down as good under all circumstances and very few which we can put down as evil under all circumstances. Even the best of deeds—even praying, even giving to the poor—may be evil. No teacher ever placed more emphasis upon prayer than Jesus. He was always urging men to pray. He himself spent whole nights in prayer. Yet his spirit revolted at the sight of the praying of the hypocritical Pharisees in the streets. There are a few deeds which we can put down as evil without looking beneath the surface, because we know that they can only proceed from an evil spirit; but most deeds cannot be intelligently labeled until we have plumbed them to the very bottom. We must know whence they spring.

And in this light we can see how absurd it is to insist that it is right to use intellectual force or moral force, but wrong to use physical force. That again makes the right or wrong of our deeds depend upon what we may have in our hands rather than upon what we may have in our hearts. I grant that it is quite unrefined to strike a man with your fist, but it is hardly as cruel as most of the gentle substitutes which our pacifist friends have been so freely using upon unoffending American audiences in the last three years. Personally I should esteem it a favor to be knocked down by half a dozen fists if I might thereby escape being run through by a brilliant antagonist who has had exceptional training in the use of a stiletto tongue.

So with those subtle distinctions which not a few brilliant academics have been making between fighting in self-defense or for the rescue of one's child from a kidnapper, on the one hand, and fighting for one's country or for the deliverance of an oppressed people from the hands of their oppressors on the other. No doubt

if we will shut our eyes to the spirit which prompts our deeds these distinctions may be recognized with little trouble, but if we will look at them in the light of the teaching of Jesus we shall see that there is no essential difference between them. In the light of this teaching, that it all depends upon the spirit that is behind the deed, we do not need to be told that there are times when it is ignoble to fight, whether the weapons in our hands are moral, intellectual or physical, and that there are times when it is a high and noble privilege to fight and to fight with the best weapons we can command, whether they are moral forces, arguments, withering denunciations, fists, or even guns. Sitting in my quiet study far away from the hearts of men who are struggling in battle "somewhere in France," it might be possible for me to read the story of their latest drive without seeing in it anything more than a horrible carnival of crime. But if as I turned from the story I should be startled by a cry for help, and should rush to the door just in time to see a mother spring like a tigress at the throat

of a big brute who was making off with her child, I would be conscious of an overwhelmingly sublime and noble spectacle. My spiritual vision may not reach as far as "somewhere in France," and I may miss the spirit of the noble fellows there at the front; but so long as it can reach as far as my next-door neighbor I shall not despair. It might be worse. I might rage against the heroism of France until the sight of a mother next door fighting like a tigress to rescue her child would mean nothing more to me than a very disagreeable and wholly uncalled-for exhibition of unrefinement.

Putting these two pictures side by side and viewing them simply as isolated spectacles I can see little difference between them. The sight of men in battle is hardly more horrible in itself than the sight of a mother springing upon a brute like a tigress. Yet the very thought of a mother fighting savagely for her offspring gives us a sense of exaltation as if we had been seeing heavenly visions. Everybody can feel the thrill of it. Everybody will say that it is a high and holy thing. Yet we

all have friends who never think upon that awful spectacle in France with any feeling other than annoyance. Why this difference? Who that has ever caught a glimpse of a man as he sprang, under the impulse of unselfish devotion, to the defense of his country or the rescue of an oppressed people, does not know that the spectacle of the mother fighting like a tigress for her child is repeated in spirit "somewhere in France" a thousand times a day!

Still we are asked to believe that the Master thinks of this whole horrible business in Europe as refined men and women think of a fight between two brutal boxers in the back room of a slum saloon.

I do not mean to exalt war. Heaven forbid! I do not mean to say that as it is usually conducted it is not often a carnival of crime. It is often a carnival of crime. I do not mean to say that it is practicable for a war to go on without an enormous amount of wrongdoing. Peace does not go on without an enormous amount of wrongdoing. All that I am trying to say is that under the teaching of Jesus we have no more right to put

down war as a sin in itself regardless of the spirit that prompts men to engage in it than we have to put down all fighting—individual or collective, moral, intellectual or physical—as a sin, regardless of the spirit that prompts men to engage in it. If we make war in general a sin in itself then the use of any kind of force against our fellow men under any circumstances is wrong, and we are forced to take our place by the side of the world's most pathetic joke, the pious Brahmin who is afraid to crush a mosquito lest he should incidentally murder his own grandfather.

Let us bring the question closer home. "Somewhere in France" is so far away. Let us think of Jones. My friend Jones —let us say—lives just half a mile out of town at the back of a thick pine forest. There is a mill a mile farther on that is infested with lawless characters. Jones is called away suddenly in the morning and as the afternoon wears away it is noticed at the mill that he has not passed on his way back. Night comes on and suddenly the news flashes over my neighborhood that a gang from the mill is on

the way to Jones's house. There are three pretty children asleep at Jones's house and a pretty young wife waiting and wishing for Jones. I have just gotten the news over the 'phone. The gang has stopped in the woods a quarter of a mile away—evidently waiting for the moon to go down.

What shall we do? My neighbor at the 'phone did not discuss the matter. He simply said, "Come on, we are going." He did not say what they were going for or whether they were going to carry anything or not. And I did not ask him. I simply——

But what would you do? We are Christians in our neighborhood—every one of us. Fairly decent Christians too. Not one of us ever hurt a man in his life. Most of us would not even enjoy killing a fly. And as fairly decent Christians we have our names at stake. And a Christian ought not to be out at night looking for trouble. After all, what is it to us? The world would be better off if everybody would mind his own business. But there is Jones's pretty wife and there are the

babies. And before midnight those brutes from the mill will break down the door and poor Jones's pretty wife——

But here is my gun. How strange! I didn't know I had it. I must have picked it up a moment ago. Heavens! What am I going to do with this gun? I—why, I am a Christian. I had better put it up in the corner and go to bed. The God who cares for the ravens when they cry will surely keep an eye on Jones's pretty wife and babies.

But this strange feeling in my heart! Perhaps this means that God already has his eye on the situation and that he is calling me. Perhaps I had better go.

But the gun! What would Jesus think if he saw me hurrying down the street with a gun! Here we are declaring war against that gang and actually going after them. And we are all Christians. Is it right to declare war except in self-defense? That gang has never done any of us any harm. What had we better do? We might leave our guns and go and meet those fellows and announce our strict neutrality. Or we might take them

along so that we shall be prepared to enforce our neutrality when we have declared it.

But there is Jones's pretty wife again. I imagine I can see her face pressed against the window pane looking for Jones. And I can see those three pretty babies asleep in bed. Oh, this fighting question! What should a Christian do? Here, surely, is no chance to turn the other cheek.

We are almost in sight of Jones's house. Nobody said anything about bringing guns, but every man has a gun. Nobody has asked what we should do. Wilkins, who takes the lead, has divided up the men and told them which were to approach the house from the front and which from the rear and so on. And the rest of us are not saying a word. Here we are—Christians all of us—followers of the Prince of Peace—and somehow we have blundered into this war and now we are actually marching into battle. Heaven help us! This is awful! Who said that war is hell? And we are Christians. Hadn't we better go back?

Listen! Heavens! They are already there. They are breaking down the door. Lord, help us! Wasn't that Jones's wife crying for help? Quick! To the right there! Take that path yonder! For the love of God—quick! Fire!

Heavens! The brute has caught her in his arms. Shoot through that window! Quick! For the love of God—quick!

It is all over. There is blood on the bed. There is blood on our hands. There is blood everywhere. There are three men lying dead on the floor. Horror of horrors! And we are Christians!

Yes, we are Christians! And we have done our duty. We have laid pretty Jones's wife upon her bed, for she has fainted, and all ten of us are trying to hold those three children in our arms at one time. And there is not a trace of hate or vengeance in our hearts. "Praise the Lord," says Wilkins, who is a Methodist. "I feel like singing the doxology," whispers Watson devoutly. "Thank the Lord, we didn't get here too late!" exclaims Smithwick. "Amen!" say we all.

VII

WHAT WAS CHRIST'S IDEA OF INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY?

THE professional pacifist who arrives on the scene half an hour after the fight is over will see nothing but the horror of it all, and naturally will reason accordingly. Knowing nothing of what has passed in our hearts he will call us murderers. He will call us beasts. We flatter ourselves that we are Christians: he will affirm with fervency that we have not been civilized, much less Christianized. He will declaim eloquently upon the sacredness of human life—having in mind, of course, the lives of the dead men on the floor and not the lives of Jones's pretty wife and babies. He will talk bitterly of those inexplicable modern lapses of humanity into savagery. He will remind us that we have not only committed a horrible crime but have done

worse: we have committed an unspeakably foolish blunder. "Why don't men listen to reason?" he will ask. We shall suggest that if we had been listening to reason we might not have heard Jones's pretty wife's cry; and he will reply that it is all nonsense; that it was none of our business anyway; that if we had been listening to reason we would have seen the utter folly of ten men of average economic value to the community risking their lives for one non-productive woman and three helpless children who are eating their heads off. Suppose those poor unfortunates had killed the last one of us and left our wives and half a hundred children to starve to death! He will lift his eyes toward heaven and wonder when humanity will ever learn to listen to reason. He will remind us that we have not only sinned against society: we have sinned against reason. If we protest and remind him of our obligation to humanity he will laugh a hard, cold, professorial laugh and suggest that we are pretty fellows to be talking about obligation to humanity. What about our obligation to those poor

fellows lying there on the floor? What about our obligation to *their* wives and children? There was no obligation upon us to bring us here. That was a matter for the law. We should have stayed at home and attended to our own business. Such matters are in the hands of the law, and if the law doesn't attend to its duty that is not our lookout. He will ask us what the law is for anyway, and he will remind us that when we put the law in operation to protect Mrs. Jones and her children we did our part. Mind you, he doesn't say Jones's pretty wife and babies: he doesn't know our neighbor Jones's pretty wife and babies. "Didn't you vote last November?" he will ask. "And didn't you pay your taxes? Didn't you provide officers of the law and put the law in motion? Then you did your part. Why did you butt in here where you had no business? Oh, this meddlesome generation! When will we learn to mind our own business and let other people's alone?" . . .

Ever since the days of Cain the human

race has been trying to escape individual responsibility. It is human to meddle with other people's business, and it is just as human to deny all responsibility for other people's business. Every generation pries into its neighbor's affairs until it is asked to lend a hand and then turns round and asks with a sneer, "Am I my brother's keeper?"

It is amazing how much inventive genius men in all ages have shown in their efforts to escape responsibility for their neighbors. The ancients sought escape through religion. Perhaps more religions have been invented for this purpose than for any other purpose in the world. Nearly all heathen religions seem to be at bottom the result of an effort to quiet, or buy off, or neutralize, or in some way get rid of the natural sense of obligation toward one's fellows which now and then seems to bob up even in the darkest corners of humanity. Our gifted friends in the East, the Japanese, succeeded in inventing a religion which enabled them to escape practically all individual obligation except their obligation to the em-

peror and his country. This is the one serious obstacle in the way of Japan's advancement outside of material lines. It has yet to develop a sense of individual obligation, without which no nation can reach a really high and lasting civilization.

In ancient times the sense of individual obligation had little chance outside of the Hebrew nation. The pagans threw their wet-blanket religions over it and usually succeeded in hushing its feeble cry. Only among the Jews was any real effort made to nurture and develop it. Every heaven-sent Hebrew prophet laid the burden of responsibility squarely upon the shoulders of individual men. Every Hebrew prophet was a standing protest against the "slacker." When Jesus came he came with an individual message to individuals. Others might talk of national responsibility, but Jesus talked to Peter not about national responsibility, but about Peter's responsibility. And when he was through Peter understood that he was responsible not only for himself but, as far as his ability lay, for everybody he could help. Men were the children of the same Father

and brothers one of another, and every man had to bear the obligation both of sonship and brotherhood. No man could be a "slacker." Every man was a brother to every other man. Every man was under obligations to be a neighbor to every man he could help. Not the parable of the Good Samaritan alone, but the whole teaching and life of Jesus emphasized this duty. Nothing that Jesus ever did or said leaves a loophole of escape. Men have been making loopholes of their own ever since his day and have been escaping through them, but they have never gotten rid of their obligations thereby. They are like escaped criminals: they can never walk abroad as freemen until they have gone back and served their sentence.

Nowadays men seldom try to escape individual obligation through religion. We have an easier loophole. We have the soulless corporation. The idea of a corporation is not new, and corporations in the past often acted in conscienceless ways: but it was left for the modern man to conceive the idea of a corporation without a soul and to apply it to other organi-

zations besides those formally recognized as corporations. In every sphere of life today men are seeking to escape individual responsibility by organizing and running their organizations as corporations, on the assumption that corporations are not handicapped by a conscience.

We are running all sorts of organizations on this basis—industrial, political, social and even religious. The governing board of a charity institution, composed of benevolent men of unblemished character and the highest business integrity, will drive a bargain for supplies such as any man of character would scorn to stoop to in his own private business. Even church boards have been known to fall under the illusion that when men are working as a board for a good cause and not for self the end justifies the means. In every sphere today one meets with the feeling that the moment men organize for united action individual responsibility ends. . . .

What does Jesus say about corporations? Nothing. Jesus does not recog-

nize a corporation: he only knows the individuals that compose it. And he has told us how we should behave as individuals. What does he say about the duties of nations? Nothing. Jesus does not recognize a nation—that is, as we usually think of a nation nowadays. So far as his teachings go, a nation is nothing more nor less than a brotherhood of individuals living close enough together to have interests in common. There is no reason why he should tell America how it should behave: he has told Americans how to behave and he is holding Americans responsible, not America. When we came together to make ourselves a nation we did not lay aside our individuality, and so long as we hold on to our individuality our individual obligations will hold on to us.

God has not made one moral law for individuals and another moral law for corporations, boards, legislatures, nations. If we are acting individually as Christians it is not our privilege to act collectively as heathen. What God requires of us as individuals he requires of us in every capacity. What he requires of us in our

own homes he requires of us in the directors' meeting, in the city council, in the church board, in the legislature, at the polls and in the trenches. Wherever I go I must take my conscience and my individual responsibility. They are as much a part of me as my head.

In the light of the teachings of Jesus America is simply a body of Americans. The thing which many good people nowadays call the American nation does not exist outside of the imagination. It is only a fictional scapegoat — a clumsy mental device invented for the relief of the consciences of delinquent Americans. And Jesus nowhere recognizes fictional scapegoats. The only American nation actually existing is a union of American people, all of whom without exception are individually responsible for its acts to the extent of their ability and opportunity; and there is no way for us to cut loose from our responsibility as Americans except by cutting loose from America. Some people imagine that they have succeeded in shifting their responsibility upon the nation; but they have only shifted it

from one shoulder to the other. They are still carrying the whole load.

It is easy to say that if I am a member of the great American body I am nothing more than a mere microscopic gland, and that therefore I cannot be expected to have anything to do with this war question one way or another. One hardly looks for a microscopic gland to step in and decide whether a nation should cast itself in the breach to save the world from tyranny or not. But that is only an illusion. A microscopic gland may be a very small thing, but I should not like for many microscopic glands in my body to go on that sort of strike.

Aside from the literalism and externalism of the rabbis there was nothing which Jesus protested against more earnestly than this heathenish idea that one man is too small to count. One sheep was not too small to count. One penny was not too small to count. In the eyes of the Father even a sparrow was not too small to count. Why should a man be too small to count? In the eyes of the Father even a piece of a man—even the sem-

blance of a man—was of more value than many sparrows. There was not a man in the world whom the Father did not count. There was not a man upon whom he had not set his heart. There was not a man for whom he had not given his Son. There was not a man to whom he had not given a place in his purpose for the world. There was not a man to whom he had not given a task in his plans to uplift mankind. In the eyes of the Father the most important thing in the world was a man. Therefore a man was not at liberty to put himself out of commission. He could not isolate himself. He could not live unto himself. He could not be a shirker. He could not say that it was none of his business. He could not refuse to be his brother's keeper. He could not refuse to have a voice or a hand in the affairs of men. He was not an insect; he was a man—a responsible being sharing the tasks of the Eternal. . . .

For nearly two thousand years it was the custom of Christians to magnify the individual in accordance with the teach-

ings of Jesus. Then something happened. Science came and put its finger upon Things. Science did such wonderful things with Things that the world could think of nothing else. It was no longer interested in men; its heart went out to Things. It dreamed of the divine destiny of Things. And every day the market value of the individual went steadily down. Today in some markets the only man who is quoted at all is the machine man or the expert who has been developed on one side at the expense of all other sides. There is a demand for men in the lump—for scientifically organized societies that can do things as machinery—but the individual is at a hopeless discount.

It is impossible for the market value of the individual to go down without dragging down the sense of individual obligation with it, and in the last generation we have seen individual obligation almost forced out of the world's market. People no longer talk about the dignity of the individual and they don't wish to hear any more, if you please, of this stale drivel about individual obligations. Here in

America, or at least in a large part of America, we seem to have turned Romans overnight, for we refuse to think of anything but our cohorts. We are as ambitious—or at least we think we are—to lose our individuality in our organizations as the Hindoo is to lose his individuality in Nirvana. Parting company with the Master and his old-fashioned ideas of the dignity and divine destiny of man, we have gone forward to magnify boards, corporations, unions, fraternities, associations, parties, nations. In this year of grace the American nation, which under God owes its origin and its all to the highest type of manhood the world has known since the days of Paul, is devoutly thanking God for the heroes of its past and at the same time magnifying soulless machines as the only hope of its future.

In the light of science this looks like progress, but in the light of the teachings of Jesus it is only a reversion to paganism. I can lose my identity in a crowd, but I cannot lose my individuality or my individual obligation. And it makes no difference whether the crowd is organized

and incorporated or only a lawless mob. I am as responsible for my acts in a corporation or a nation as I am for my acts in a lawless mob. If a thing is wrong for me as an individual it is wrong for me as a citizen of my country. If it is wrong for me as a citizen of my country it is wrong for my country, and it is my duty to the extent of my ability and opportunity to see that my country does not do that which would be wrong for its individual citizens to do. If it is wrong for me to make war against my neighbor for selfish reasons, it is wrong for my country to make war against its neighbor for selfish reasons. If it is wrong for me to demand an eye for an eye, it is wrong for my country to demand an eye for an eye. If getting into a difficulty with my neighbor does not give me a right to retaliate, the fact that my country is at war with its neighbor does not give my country a right to retaliate. If it is right for me to use force if necessary to deliver the oppressed from the oppressor it is right for my country. If it is wrong for me to use more force in such instances than necessary it is

wrong for my country. America has no more right to stand indifferently by while a tyrannical government grinds its heel in the face of a prostrate nation than I have to stand indifferently by while a tyrannical neighbor living on my right grinds his heel in the face of my helpless neighbor living on my left. America has no more right to shut its ears against a cry for help than I have. America has no more right to show the white feather than I have. America must be just as human, just as compassionate, just as unselfish, just as true to God and humanity, just as quick to succor the oppressed, just as true to every high moral obligation as in my best moments I have tried to be and as in all moments I know I ought to be.

VIII

CAN A CHRISTIAN BE A "SLACKER"?

THE kingdom of Christ is a kingdom of peace, but you cannot establish a kingdom without war. And the army of Christ is still on the fighting line. The moment we enlist in his service we find ourselves face to face with forces of evil which call for all the fighting spirit we have and more. And what we lack he will supply. There are teachings of Jesus which cannot get into the blood without turning the veriest "slacker" into a hero. If a man is a Christian he is bound to fight. It is in his blood. He cannot retreat. He cannot surrender. He cannot hide his head in the sand. He must fight.

Christianity means war. It doesn't necessarily mean this or that kind of a war, but it means war. We cannot follow

Christ and not fight. We must fight individually and we must fight as a people. We must fight with our spirits—heaven only knows how we have to fight with our spirits! We must fight with our intellects. And so long as savagery remains in the world—so long as there are human beings who are not susceptible to moral appeal—it may be necessary once in a long while to fight with our bodies. We may cut war out of our hymns and our rituals and our school histories and our ethical culture societies, but we cannot cut it out of the Christian life. A Christian is no "slacker." A Christian is every inch a fighter.

How often a dear, white-faced, saintly soul, who never killed a fly, has confessed to you that her life, which always seemed as serene as a June sunset, was one long fierce battle for Christ in the secret places of her home—a battle in which her gentle lips and even her blue-veined hands often had to come to the help of her heroic spirit!

What are the teachings of Jesus that force Christians to fight?

He has put them all together for us in one word. That word is love. Not selfish passion, but love. Not a narrow, exclusive love, but an all-embracing love. Not love for some men, but love for all men. Not love for men alone, but love for God and men. Not any sort of love for God and men, but filial love for God and brotherly love for men.

There is nothing that makes a man fight like love. If a man reaches the point where he can love God as his Father and his fellow men as his brothers he will have enough love to make him fight as long as he lives. We have been told that if we really love God and our fellow men we will not fight, or at any rate we will not use physical force. That is like saying that if I really love my wife and children I will run when they are in danger. If I love my wife and children I am bound to fight for them and I am bound to fight as hard as I can and with the best weapons at my command, regardless of whether they are physical or not. The thing that keeps some men from fighting for their wives and children with the best weapons

at their command is not love. When a man tells you that he will not fight for his country because he is a planetary patriot and loves all countries, you know that the barrier in the way is not love. It is nothing but a yellow streak.

Planetary patriotism may be defined as a modern device used as a covering for yellow streaks. It is not yet perfected and unless greatly stretched usually leaves both ends of the streak exposed.

If I love God as my Father—the Father whom Jesus has shown us—I will obey him and I will want to see his will done on earth as it is done in heaven. I will fall in with his purposes and plans. And naturally I will come out squarely against all the forces that are mobilized against him. I will do everything I can in behalf of his will and I will oppose with all my might every force that is seeking to defeat his will.

Here, for instance, is his plan for rescuing human beings from the low level of sheer animalism and putting his spirit into them and helping them to achieve their divine destiny as men—sons of God.

Jesus has told us about this plan. He has shown how his heart is set upon it. Here are millions of human beings with wonderful possibilities—beings made in the image of God and designed to walk with him as his sons. At present they are grazing with cattle. And they are slaves —like cattle tied to a stake. God has a plan to set them free and help them up to the high plateaus of the land of the spirit where they may become men indeed —where they may reach the stature of mankind not in body merely, or mind merely, but in spirit. As a Christian it is my business to fall in with this plan. Millions of people today have no chance. They are bound down by sin, by ignorance, by their fellow men. The bond of sin God alone can break, but he is looking to us to break the rest. If human beings are to be saved—if they are to rise to manhood and achieve the end of their being—they must have freedom and light. Their shackles must be broken off so that they can go and they must have light that they may see which way to go. They must have life also, but that is God's mat-

ter. Our business is to give them freedom and light. So long as there is a man in the world who has no chance it is our business to fight for him and to keep on fighting until the chance is given him. We may not have to use physical force. If we will make the best of our own chance and rise to the heights of spiritual manhood we shall have a superior force which in most cases will do the work better than physical force. But whether we have to use physical force or not we have got to see that every bound human being is set free and given a chance.

And certainly if we love our fellow men as brothers—and we shall love them as brothers the moment we come to love God as our Father—we are going to fight with all our might, regardless of whether we have to use physical force or not. We are going to help along everything that makes for mankind and we are going to fight everything that tends to destroy manhood. We will fight pacifism not only because it is contrary to the teachings of Jesus, but because its whole tendency is to make a yellow streak where you want a man. We

will fight "Safety first," not merely because it is the password of pacifism and the slogan of selfishness, but because its whole tendency is to save a man's skin and let the man go to the devil. If men are teaching half truths that are honeycombing the nation's manhood we are going to fight them, whether they teach them in the name of religion or only in the name of business. If a nation reaches the point where it is in danger of being overwhelmed by materialistic appeals and where it must either respond to a higher appeal and go to war or else lose what manhood it has, we are going to stand for war, though we may hate war a thousand times worse than a father hates to punish his disobedient child, and though we may be unable to sleep of nights for the thought of its horrors.

Heaven knows there is little enough manhood in the world. And the Father's heart is set upon making men. He gave his Son as a pattern to make them by and to give his life that human beings might not perish but might achieve their divine destiny as men. And surely if the Son

is burning with indignation to-day—as some good people think—it is not at the sight of men shooting one another in Europe, horrible as that may be, but at the sight of men here in America who in their amazing zeal for the gospel of selfishness have exalted the yellow streak as a golden image and are hysterically calling upon the nation's manhood to fall down before it. . . .

Much of our hazy and foolish thinking about this war question may be traced to the common failure to realize that the love which Jesus requires really means something in particular. It is so easy to think of it as a very charming but highly sublimated sentiment of no earthly use—something which the master intended we should carry in our hearts for safekeeping, as a woman carries a precious but quite unuseful locket in her bosom.

This would be a natural mistake if Jesus had only talked about love and told us that all he wanted us to do was just to love. But Jesus has never asked us just to love. He always asks us to love some-

thing in particular and in a particular way. He asks us to love God as a son loves or ought to love his father. He asks us to love men as a man loves or ought to love his brother. In other words what he requires of the world is a real love, which acts in the very same way in the world's life as real love in the family acts as family love. This truth is not only conspicuous in his sayings but is even more conspicuous in his life. Look through the gospel story, and wherever you come upon him you will see him either in the character of a son whose heart is wrapped up in his Father and his Father's interests or as a loving brother ready to throw himself into the breach for his brother's sake. Now he is helping forward his Father's plans; now he is exalting his Father's will; now he is fighting his Father's enemies—the Pharisees—almost as fiercely as I would fight a brute who has his fingers at the throat of my child; now he is throwing himself into the breach for a brother; now he is breaking the chains of some poor fellow who is bound hand and foot by disease or sin; now he is

standing up for the oppressed against the oppressor. How often he stands up for the oppressed against the oppressor! He even takes the part of a wretched adulteress against the oppression of a lot of church dignitaries. He is a brother to us all, and it is inconceivable that he should stand silently by while tyrants grind their heels in our faces. . . .

No; Jesus did not use physical force. But that does not mean that he regarded physical force as a brutal thing; it only means that he regarded it as an inferior thing. Would I choose to pounce upon a mob of desecrators in the temple with my fists if I could hold a little, harmless whip of small cords aloft as a symbol of authority to catch their eye and then speak a word that would sweep the entire mob headlong before me?

No; Jesus did not use physical force. But it may be worth while to remember that he used such force as he needed. If he were here to-day I do not imagine that he would meet an oppressor who was so brutalized that no spiritual weapon could

find its way beneath his skin, but if he should meet such a monster I am sure he would not throw up his hands. If the monster had his fingers at a little child's throat and he could give him no word or look that would overwhelm him and force him to loosen his grip, I do not imagine that he—he who said, "Suffer little children to come unto me"—would go on his way and leave the child to be choked to death.

IX

WHAT WAS CHRIST'S IDEA OF THE VALUE OF HUMAN LIFE?

YOU cannot stand in the operating room at a hospital and think sanely on the problem of human suffering while your son is on the operating table. The horror of it all crazes you. So it is with this war question. The pacifist lecturer takes his place before the footlights and with a few wonderful strokes pictures for us this horror of a great darkness in Europe, and when our hearts are breaking and our brains have turned to a scrapheap asks how any human being can vote for war. Of course we cannot vote for war. How can we vote for a wild and ravenous beast that sucks the blood of men and devours the hearts of women and little children?

One of the things that runs us mad is

the horrible loss of life. This has always been a terrifying thing, but it is more terrifying to-day than it ever was before. The scientist will tell us that this is probably because human life is so much more valuable to-day than it ever was before, but to our ordinary untrained minds it seems more reasonable to suppose that it is because this generation has set a higher price on human life than was ever set before. The price of human life has been steadily going up for a hundred years. It began to rise at the ushering in of the Age of Comfort and it rose steadily until the discovery of ether, when it took a tremendous jump; and it has been jumping ever since. Since that day we have done more to preserve our precious lives and make them comfortable than was done in all the generations that preceded it, and to-day it is by far the highest stock in the world's market. In ancient times it was a common saying that all that a man hath will he give for his life; but to us moderns that figure is too modest: we are sure that he will give all that he can borrow, beg or steal.

And the price is still soaring.

It would seem time to ask whether this human life stock of ours is not badly watered. Certainly we are charging many times more for it than our fathers did in the sixties and we are not accustomed to speak lightly of the offerings of those stressful times.

I asked an intelligent woman why our young men were not offering themselves for their country, and she answered simply:

"Mothers don't want to lose their sons."

I remembered that the women of my town in '61 led their sons to the door and, holding back their tears, kissed them and told them to go. And I fancied that the life of a son was rather precious even in those primitive days.

I asked a young guardsman on duty at an electric plant if he would like to go to the front. I knew that young militiamen used to hate that kind of service and were always hoping to be sent to the front. He shook his head and said he would rather stay where he was for the next six years. I asked him about his comrades and he as-

sured me they were all alike. Nobody wanted to go.

It was but a straw, but there are vast fields filled with such straws. And straws still have a way of showing which way the wind is blowing.

Unless history is a lie there never was a time when men counted their lives so dear unto themselves as they do to-day. It was not that the young guardsman loved his country less: it only meant that he loved his life more.

There is a crumb of comfort in the reflection that we are still heroes in our childhood. A little fellow told me yesterday that he dreamed the other night that he was trying to make his way with his baby sister between the British and German trenches in a battle, when he saw a cannon ball coming straight toward her.

"What did you do?" I asked. He laughed. "Oh," he said, a little sheepishly, "I jumped in front of her, and it knocked me down; but I got up and got her out all right." . . .

Indifference to human life has always

been the curse of the non-Christian world. Even the modern Japanese will risk his life to rescue a fifty-cent picture of his emperor from a burning building. Civilization never got anywhere except on the surface until the price of human life began to rise. But in the last hundred years the pendulum—if I may change the figure—has swung to the other extreme. Here in America we moderns have put the price of life as far above its actual value as the heathen ever put it below. Time and again in the last two or three years I have seen it raised above everything else in the world. I have known women to plead for higher wages for shop girls so that they would not *have* to sell their virtue in order to live. "Somewhere in America" an audience of women frenziedly applauded a girl who declared that she would justify any girl in selling her virtue to provide bread for her family. I have seen the price of life shamelessly raised above honor, above right, above justice, above sacrifice, above patriotism, above every high and holy obligation. We have used "Safety first" to smother out

a high moral impulse, and the next moment piously cursed our enemies for putting military necessity before the obligations of humanity. Ever since the discovery of ether we have been running from pain and heat and cold and wind and rain, and inventing headache remedies, and making easy-chairs easier, and turning our homes into padded kiddy-coops; and the pampering and coddling business has gone on until we have come to feel that this precious little spark in us that we call life is of more importance to the world than God himself. . . .

Undoubtedly Jesus set high value upon human life. All life, he taught, was precious in the eyes of God. Not a sparrow falleth to the ground without our Father. The preservation of our lives is so important to him that we need suffer no anxiety about them: we only need to do our best and leave the rest to him. The life is more than meat and the body than raiment. He was concerned not only about life but about health: he wanted

men to be fully alive that they might always live at their best.

But the value which Jesus set upon life was spiritual, not material. He looked at the present life as a high and sacred opportunity. It was the chance which the Father gave to every human being to achieve the divine destiny of manhood; to find his way into the kingdom of God and live forever; to share in God's purpose for mankind, and to help his fellow men to achieve their divine destiny also.

I can find no evidence that he valued human life in any other way. A man's life was valuable just in proportion to the use he was making of it or was going to make of it. If he was not doing anything with it at all its value was only prospective. If he was not going to do anything with it at all it was worth no more than a barren figtree. A cumberer of the ground is only worth its weight in firewood *minus* the cost of cutting it down and cutting it up.

But in the eyes of Jesus no life was anything like as precious as the world has come to regard men's lives in our day.

A man might easily value his life too highly. The man who thinks that his life is so valuable that he must give up everything else to save it will find at the end that he must give up everything: he has nothing left—not even life itself. "He that findeth his life shall lose it." If I try to save my life at the cost of right, justice, virtue, truth, manhood, the friendship of God, I shall pay more for it than it is worth and even then I shall fail to get it. A few years of physical existence that will come to me out of the bargain will not be life.

Highly as Jesus valued life in this world as an opportunity, he did not value it at all when placed in the scales over against any of the things which make for life eternal. When it comes to deciding between these things and life a true man must choose to die. At such a time a man must lose his life if he would save it.

In other words Jesus looked at life just as every man who has reached the full stature of spiritual manhood looks at it today. In the eyes of every human being who has achieved spiritual manhood the

value of life is relative. If you hold up such a man on the road and demand his money or his life he may give you his money; but if you demand his life or his honor, his life or his manhood, his life or his allegiance to Christ or to truth or to his sacred vows or to humanity or to his country, he will hand over his life. And he will do it not as a suicide or a coward, but as one to whom God has given his own vision and who can therefore see things in their true proportion.

It is plain, then, that when a Christian is held up and compelled to decide between his life and his allegiance to Christ or to humanity or to his country, he must decide not in the darkness of the crazing horrors of war, but in the light that comes from the face of Christ. So long as Jesus could go forward in his work and preserve his life without surrendering or compromising his honor, his manhood, his teachings, his allegiance to the Father, he went on with his work and he took care of his life. Time and again he saved himself from the mob. But when the time came that he had to choose between these

things and his life, when his enemies reached the point where they could say that he must either surrender or die, he set his face as a flint and went calmly forward to his death.

It was in the same spirit that his servant Paul went forward, whether to life or to death.

"Behold I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there. . . . But I hold not my life of any account as dear unto myself, so that I may accomplish my course."

The value of life, I have said, is relative. There are times when it is better to die than to live. There are times when life is not worth fighting for. There are other times when life is worth so much that we might give our own lives for it. If my child falls into the river my valuation of his life instantly goes up, and my valuation of my own life instantly goes down. If I stand on the river bank and watch my own child drown my own life will not be worth a fig.

Pacifism run out to its logical end will bid me stay on the river bank. I am a

poor swimmer and my life is more precious than the child's. Reason will bid me stay also. How foolish to throw my life away and leave my other children starve! But if there is a spark of the life of the spirit in my heart—if there is a trace of the image of God there—I am going to plunge in.

The argument for the sacredness of human life undoubtedly condemns every unnecessary death in war, but so long as men are called to risk their lives for things that are more precious than life it is not a condemnation of war in itself. Nor is it a warning for Christians never to have any part in any war under any circumstances. It only warns them not to plunge into war in a spirit that is not in harmony with the Lord of Life. The thing that makes one blush for shame at the thought of the part that Christians have had in war is not that they have fought, but that they have usually fought like heathen.

X

WHAT WAS CHRIST'S IDEA OF PEACE?

WHAT is this white dove our hearts are longing for? Is it a heaven-born, living thing ever flying above our heads, but ever ready to settle down upon such as seek it with upright hearts, or is it an expensive but quite uninspiring piece of taxidermy that can be bought by anybody who has the cash to pay for it?

I wish this generation could be persuaded to sit down with its Bible and do a bit of clear, honest thinking on this point. I am sure we shall never get the tangle out of our war question until we have gotten it out of this peace question.

Here are these wonderful visions of the old Hebrew prophets. Here is a picture of a peace that flows like a river. Is that the kind of peace we are looking for?

There is a peace that flows like a river,

and there is a peace that stands still like a stagnant millpond and smells to heaven.

Here is a vision of a glorious day coming when "they shall sit every man under his vine and under his figtree, and none shall make them afraid." Certainly this looks very much like the peace many of us are looking for today. It is enough to make the mouth of Big Business water to think of a glad day coming when every man will sit at his own office desk and work out his own schemes and none—not even the war gods of Europe, nor the money gods of Wall Street, nor the demagogues of Congress, nor the autocrats of labor, nor those pesky, omnipresent bloodhounds of the city editor, nor the gumshoes of the Department of Justice—shall make him afraid. But is this the vision that Micah saw? What was it that Micah saw?

"But in the latter days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of Jehovah's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and peoples shall flow unto it. And many nations shall go and

say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach of his ways, and we will walk in his paths . . . and he will judge between many peoples." *

Is that the peace America is longing for today? Is that the peace the professional pacifist is holding out to us—the peace that comes to those who sit at His feet and walk in his ways and look to him as their judge? Is America ready to sit at his feet, or is it only looking for a chance to sit securely under its own vine and figtree?

Here is another thrilling vision — a vision of a time coming when "the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together: and a little child shall lead them." Is this the peace we are looking for? No doubt we should all like to see the time come in America when, as I have said elsewhere,† the poor man could safely

* Micah 4: 1–3.

† *Our Troublesome Religious Questions*, p. 178 (*Revell*).

dwell with the money-lender and the little manufacturer could lie down with the big trust, and the innocent human calves could trust themselves in the hands of their representatives in Congress. But what must happen to bring in that happy day? Look at the picture again. Did you notice that the lion was eating straw like the ox? Would a lion eat straw like an ox unless he had undergone a change of heart? And is that the kind of peace we want—a peace that will come not from a change of our international laws but from a change of heart?

But let us come to the teachings of Jesus. Here is Jesus magnifying peace. "Blessed are the peacemakers." Here is Jesus speaking peace—to the winds, to the troubled sea, to the troubled hearts of men. Here is Jesus promising peace. "My peace give I unto you." Is this the peace we are longing for? Is it because we are hungry for the peace which Jesus gives that we are fighting war, or is it only because we are hungry for that outward quiet, that freedom from interruption and disturbance that enables us

to pursue our own selfish material ends in security and with physical and mental comfort?

We might as well be honest with ourselves. The world is hating war today, not because it is craving for the peace that Jesus promised for its eternal welfare, but because it is craving the peace it has promised itself for its own present material comfort. All the pious drivel of the professional pacifist cannot hide this fact. We may talk as fervently as we please of the love we should have for our fellow men, but so long as millions of our fellow men are under the heel of the oppressor and have no chance to achieve their divine destiny, the love we should have for them will lead to war rather than peace. Not to hate, not to revenge, not to greed, not to crime, not to unnecessary violence, but to war—to the earnest use of such force, whether moral, intellectual or physical as may be necessary to break the grip of the oppressor, to hold back savagery, to lift the oppressed to their feet and give them a chance. The thing that holds back a

people from war when matters have come to such a pass that it cannot keep back without losing its manhood and ignoring every high moral obligation, is not love of peace, nor love for the God of peace, nor love for one's fellow men, but love of self. We may plead for peace in the name of Jesus and humanity until we have persuaded ourselves that it is because of our love for Jesus and humanity that we want it, but the fact remains that the peace which the American people as a people have had their hearts set upon for the last three years is a peace that Jesus would despise and a peace that would work humanity's ruin.

The only peace that heaven ever offered to men either through Judaism or Christianity, either through Isaiah or Christ, is the peace that flows from righteousness: not the harmony that comes from falling in with things as they are for the sake of quiet, but the harmony that comes from falling in with the will of God. Such a peace comes to every man who is rescued from the depths of animalism, where self rules, and lifted to

the high plateaus of the kingdom of God, where men can keep step in perfect harmony with God as their Father, and where they can walk in perfect harmony shoulder to shoulder with one and another as brothers. That alone secures the peace of God which passeth understanding. The thing that has been so loudly magnified in America of late as peace—the thing we get by surrender or compromise, by sacrificing our manhood, by consenting to the rule of tyrants, by hiding our eyes to the chains which bind our fellow men, by ignoring right and justice and truth and all our highest obligations to God and humanity—that thing is not peace at all. It is a monstrous abortion born of our own selfish hearts; a worthless imitation; at best a cowardly armistice which only serves as a breathing spell between wars. It was that wretched make-believe which Jesus had in mind when he declared that the Son of man came not to send peace, but a sword. . . .

Let me see if I can put what I have been trying to say in a picture.

Jesus comes to our troubled hearts as he came to his disciples that dark stormy night walking upon the water—the thing, by the way, which they were most afraid of. When we receive him into our ship the winds immediately cease and a great calm fills our hearts. But the next moment we become conscious of a situation that must have attention. The horror of the storm is gone and we have ceased to tremble and a sweet, holy calm broods over all; but——

Well, if things were not right in my home and the Master should come to spend awhile with me, something would happen—something besides the passing of storms, I am sure. I know that if a storm was raging in my heart at the time it would instantly pass. All the horror of it would pass and in its place would come an ineffable peace. But that would not be all. The next moment as I stood looking into his face I would think of something, and I would have to ask him to take a seat and excuse me for a little while. And I would hurry out and proceed to set the house to rights. I would hide or

burn everything I did not want him to see. If anything was going on in any part of the house which I knew to be contrary to his will I would stop it. If I could not stop it with my tongue or my moral force I would stop it with a hickory switch. Nothing should be allowed in my home that I would be ashamed for him to see. If I had a tyrant for a son and he had jumped on his younger brother and bound him hand and foot with a rope and thrown him into the cellar, that matter would have to be righted even if I had to wear out a dozen hickory switches. If I had a gambling brother who was at his game with a friend in his room upstairs he would have to put up his game or leave the house. If anybody from garret to cellar was oppressing anybody else he would have to stop, whatever it might cost me to stop him. By the time I got through I think I would understand what the Master meant when he said that he came not to send peace but a sword.

Setting things to rights to harmonize with Jesus means war.

The Master did indeed come to send

peace, but not the kind of peace that comes from acquiescence in the existing status when the existing status happens to be wrong. When he stepped aboard the little storm-bound ship that dark night the storm ceased in the hearts of his disciples as well as in the sea. Everything that came from the Master that night—the glance of his eye, the sound of his voice—was saying "Peace"! But if as he came aboard he had glanced around and found Judas Iscariot about to club John over the head, I fancy he would not have been content to sit down and acquiesce in the existing status without a word. And when he spoke I fancy he would not have said, "Anything for the sake of peace."

XI

WHAT WOULD JESUS SAY TODAY?

IN the light of the teachings of Jesus it is plain that we must judge a war not by the evils which attend it but by the purpose and spirit which run through it. This, of course, is a difficult task. Often—usually, perhaps—it is an impossible task. It is easy under this rule to pass upon war in the abstract. We can say that when men go to war under the compulsion of a high moral appeal or a high moral necessity, remembering their obligations to God as their Father and to all men as their brothers, they are blameless; and that when they go under the promptings of selfishness, greed, hate, ambition, pride, or any other ignoble impulse, the blood of their brothers is upon them. And it is quite possible to conceive of cir-

cumstances in which we might pass upon war in the concrete. No one who has any spiritual vision at all would have any difficulty in passing upon my little fictional war for the rescue of Jones's pretty wife and babies. In that case there were only a few of us and all were of one mind and one heart. But such a war is not possible on a large scale. Nowhere in the world can you get together a million men in whose hearts selfishness has given way to a high and holy purpose. In most wars there is such a mixture of motives that it is almost impossible for the wisest of men to come to any sort of a verdict. A nation sometimes begins a war with high motives and ends it with low motives, and in such a case there is usually a vast maze of varying motives lying between which no mind can untangle. Even a slight turn in my little fictional war might have made it an intricate puzzle. Suppose while we were charging the gang at Jones's house I had discovered that the leader was the brute who knocked me down one night in the road and robbed me, and suppose in that instant a savage de-

sire for revenge had surged up in my bosom and I had shot him down under that brutal impulse instead of under the divine compulsion of a high moral necessity. And suppose my neighbor Smith had discovered an enemy also and had followed my example. Would we have remembered it as a high and holy war, or would we have tried to forget it as a carnival of crime? Or would we have had to content ourselves with a Scotch verdict?

Good people are asking what Jesus would do if he were among us today. One thing I am sure he would not do. He would not indulge in wholesale commendation on the one hand or wholesale denunciation on the other. No doubt his mind could untangle the vast maze of motives that run through it all, but he would see too many good motives to say that it was altogether bad and certainly he would see too many bad motives to say that it was altogether good. I am not sure that he would undertake to pass upon the war as a whole at all.

But I am sure he would not remain silent. We might conceive of him as be-

ing so overcome by grief and indignation for a time that he could not speak, but he would not remain silent. He would not decline to be quoted.

Knowing him as we do, I am sure his first impulse would be an impulse of pity. His heart would go out with infinite compassion for all who need it. And that would probably cover us all. But it would be a sane compassion. He would not give most of his pity to those who were in the wrong simply because they happened to be harder pressed than their enemies. There is nothing morbid in the compassion of Jesus. He would find much to weep over on both sides, but I cannot conceive that his sympathy would find expression in baskets of flowers for the oppressor, or that he would keep back a part of the pity he had intended for Belgium because the Belgians in their hour of trial failed to show a proper regard for the comfort of their invaders.

And I am sure that as he gazed through his tears there would presently come up from the depth of his soul a mighty burst of indignation. I can hear him now say-

ing to his followers: "How long shall I be with you: how long shall I suffer you?" Nearly two thousand years have passed since he charged his people with the business of rescuing human beings from the depths of animalism and lifting them to the heights of manhood in the kingdom of God; and we have hardly made a beginning. Only here and there have we risen to our duty and broken off the chains of savagery, ignorance and tyranny with which our neighbors were bound and given them a chance to stand on their feet. Nearly two thousand years have passed since he charged us with the business of extending his kingdom throughout the world, and although today we have numbers and strength sufficient to accomplish almost anything for him that human power can accomplish, we still lack the courage to use our power to advance his will in any high place under the sun. Worldly churches have used their power to advance their own interests, but that is another matter. Never in all these years have Christ's people united to demand of the powers that be that nations

shall be run in accordance with his moral demands. Never have the Christian forces of the world mobilized to deliver the oppressed, to drive tyranny out of power, to demand of the governments of the earth that every being made in the image of God shall have a chance to achieve his divine destiny.

I am also sure that his indignation would be as a blasting wind upon the spirits of all men who have waged this war for selfish motives and especially upon those who have shed blood for such motives in the name of God or under pretense of being divinely led. He would rebuke these men as terribly as he rebuked the hypocrites of old. And he would not stop with them. He would turn to the men who have fought with hate in their hearts, who have struck back not for the right but for revenge, who have used measures of retaliation for vengeance' sake; and his flaming eyes would sweep them out of his following as desecrators of his Father's house.

What would he say to the men in the trenches? For those who are there under

the compulsion of motives which no man would blush to own at his feet, certainly he would have no word that was not heartening or uplifting. In the light of his teaching it would not seem strange if he should counsel some men to go home, but they would be men who had denied their manhood, their country and their God by taking up arms from ignoble motives. In other words they would be men who had not gone to war at all, but had only gone into the business of human butchery for gain.

As he went hither and thither relieving the suffering and cheering the true-hearted there would no doubt fall from his lips many words of commendation, but they would not be for good marksmanship or mere physical bravery: they would be for those who kept their gaze upon the star of sacrifice and upon their high calling as children of the Father and brothers of men, and for those who while trembling in body never failed to stand steady and true in spirit. Also he would soothe the spirit of the dying Jew as well as the dying Christian; and if one pointed

out to him that the Jewish rabbi who snatched a crucifix from an Irish soldier and held it up before the eyes of a dying Catholic he would say—I am sure that he would say—"He that is not against us is for us."

And I am sure of one thing more. I am sure his spirit would burn with indignation at the sight of men—whether kings, generals or common soldiers—coolly laying aside moral obligation as a mere scrap of paper on the ground of military necessity. . . .

What would he say to America?

Nothing. He does not know America. At least he does not know the convenient fiction which so many of us call by that name and which warms us with a patriotic glow only when we imagine that we have shifted our obligations upon its shoulders. But he would have somewhat to say to us Americans.

Perhaps he would say, for one thing, "These ye ought to have done, and not to have left the other undone."

I do not think he would be severe upon

us for not going to our task until the eleventh hour, for he once told a very encouraging story for people who for one reason or another do not go to their task until that hour. But I think he would give us a word of warning. He would remind us that we have an opportunity to show whether we are his true followers or only his distant admirers. He would tell us that if we are going to the front under the compulsion of a high moral appeal or a high moral necessity his blessing will go with us, but that we had better take care to keep our hearts sacred to this high motive to the end. He would tell us that if we have high moral obligations to keep us at home, still we are brethren and each of us must do his "bit." We can not refuse to help the cause of humanity in France because we are kept at home any more than we can refuse to help extend Christ's kingdom in China because we are kept at home. And perhaps he would go further. Perhaps he would tell us that while it is ignoble for a man to forsake the loved ones who are dependent upon him and go to the front without compulsion,

under pretense of patriotism, it is equally ignoble for him to stay at home for the sake of greed under any pretense whatsoever.

XII

WHAT SHOULD BE THE CHRISTIAN'S ATTITUDE TOWARD WAR?

I AM glad that the world has at last come to hate war. Not that I think it means as much as we are just now taking it to mean. Certainly it does not mean that we have come to love peace. I can see no sign that the world is getting very hungry for real peace. It wants freedom from disturbance, but that does not necessarily mean more than it wants to get rid of things that rack men's nerves and destroy their comfort and imperil their lives and interfere with their business. It is weary of noise, but I do not think it is hungry for the quiet of the fields in the cool of the evening. It is sick and tired of interruptions, but it is not longing for an opportunity to sit by the twilight fire alone.

Still it means something. Hating war does not insure peace, but it may bring about conditions in which it will be easier to awaken in men's hearts a yearning for real peace and a real willingness to fall in with the mind of the Prince of Peace. I know there are good people who imagine that this rising hatred of war is itself proof that we have already fallen in with that mind; but Jesus was not a mere hater of war. A coward would excel him as a hater of war. In the light of his teachings I cannot conceive of him as standing before an American audience today and affirming that war is such a horrible thing that we must immediately banish it from the world regardless of conditions or consequences. Jesus was never blind to conditions. Nor did he have anything in his spirit in common with the academic hero of our day whose favorite exhibition of courage is a fine recklessness of consequences where other people are concerned. You could not get him to think of himself, but where other people were concerned he had to think. And he thought of consequences. I am sure he would not ask me

to go through a forest where lions abound without taking my gun. Nor would he ask me to show my love for a lawless neighbor by intrusting my money to his keeping or by confiding to him that I had decided to give away my pistol and sleep with my windows open. Jesus would prefer that I defer my trip among lions without a gun until that happy day when a little child shall lead them, and he would not have me relax my precaution against my lawless neighbor until he had undergone a like change of heart.

But would not Jesus say that war is a horrible thing? Undoubtedly. But let us look into his face. Often I see him going about in the character of the Good Physician. How would a good and wise physician probably think of war? I can easily imagine that if Jesus should come among us today he would talk about war as a good and wise physician would talk about a horrible last-resort operation that is performed in rare cases at a hospital. War at best, he would say, is too terrible to think of except in rare cases and then only as a last resort; and if we are driven

to it we must go to our task in the same spirit that prompts a conscientious Christian surgeon to undertake a terrible operation as a last resort. . . .

I cannot see how one can stand in the light of the teachings of Jesus and insist that no sort of war is ever necessary under any circumstances. So long as it is our duty to coöperate with Christ in rescuing human beings from the slavery of sin, ignorance and tyranny, so long must we be at war with sin, ignorance and tyranny; and so long as this war goes on we shall be in danger of being driven to the use of physical force. Among these enemies are some whom we can occasionally overwhelm by intellectual force; others by spiritual force; but there are others who are so savage that nothing but a material weapon can get beneath their skin; and so long as such enemies of God and humanity remain in the world all the power in the world cannot insure its permanent freedom from physical war.

On the other hand it is just as true that war is only necessary in very rare cases.

If I have a violent next-door neighbor it is possible that the time may come when it will be necessary for the protection of my loved ones or my other neighbors to give him a sound thrashing. But how many good and wise men ever found it necessary to give their next-door neighbor a sound thrashing?

If I were living as Jesus lived I would have such moral force that I could disarm any troublesome neighbor who was not altogether savage without the use of an ounce of physical force. And it is not often that a man has a savage for a next-door neighbor. Moreover, if I were wise as well as good it is quite possible that I could so conduct myself that even if I should have a savage for a neighbor it might not be necessary to give him a sound thrashing once in a lifetime.

So, if we Americans had been doing our duty as Christians for the last hundred years, if we had devoted half as much time to our moral and spiritual development as we have devoted to our material development, if we had developed half as much moral power as material power, it is quite

probable that we would have enough moral power today to force good behavior upon any troublesome nation that was not altogether savage without firing a gun or even calling for volunteers. Moreover if we were wise as well as good it is quite possible that we could so conduct ourselves that even if we should have a savage nation for a neighbor it might not be necessary to give it a sound thrashing once in its lifetime.

But all this only reduces the chances of war to a minimum. It does not get rid of the minimum. And it is not the part of wisdom to ignore what we cannot get rid of. We have got to take this minimum into account. We have got to take these rare cases into account. Now and then, so long as savagery remains in the world, all our moral force and all our wisdom may prove insufficient, and we may have to go to war as a last resort.

The important thing to remember just here is that while we may be blameless if we are driven into war we are not blameless if we drift into it. We have no more right to allow this nation to drift into war

than a physician has to allow his patient to drift into an operating hospital. The physician who neglects his patient until an operation becomes necessary is a criminal, and where a people neglect conditions until a war thereby becomes necessary they are criminals. War is so terrible a thing that no people can stand idly by and see their nation drift into it and be blameless.

This is, or ought to be, a very sore subject for modern Christians. In ancient and medieval times nations plunged into war. Nowadays they usually drift into it. In primitive times our ancestors no doubt got a lot of fun out of squabbling with their neighbors. But since the Good Samaritan has been passing our way all that is changed. We really feel nowadays that a quarrel between neighbors is a terrible thing. Yet quarrels between neighbors have not ceased. We still have them, mainly because when we lost the incentive to fight our neighbors we fell into the habit of drifting. It is the absence of a strong incentive that makes men and nations drift.

Of course we don't want to go back to the old incentive either as individuals or as nations. That no doubt would stop our perilous drifting, but it would take us back to our old ways. What we need is an incentive that will stop our drifting and take us forward to better ways. . . .

Apparently the first incentive to war was the sheer fun of fighting. It is hard to realize that this incentive lasted until the beginning of our modern civilization. But it passed at last. One still knows a few people who dearly love a "scrap," but no nation now goes to war for the sheer fun of it.

The next incentive is hate. That has not yet passed, but it is passing. The modern man is not averse to hating his neighbor, but he is of a practical turn and he calculates that he can no longer afford to pay the price. Usually it takes something more than hate alone to plunge a modern nation into war.

After hate came greed—greed for gain or glory or both. This undoubtedly is the dominant incentive of our own time, and thus far it shows little sign of passing.

Naturally it would be expected to outlive hate, but just now it is being pressed by another incentive—love. I am not sure that any nation has ever waged war for love alone—not even for love of country; but unquestionably it has been playing an ever-increasing part in modern wars. The present war may be the most terrible war the world ever saw; but it is not the worst. It is far from being the worst. Even its horrifying savagery is not to be compared with the savagery of ancient warfare. We talk of the rivers of blood that are flowing through Europe: we lose sight of the far deeper and broader rivers of compassion that are flowing round the world. If there is more hate, there is more love. If there is more greed, there is more liberality. If there is more selfishness, there is more sacrifice. It is not because our wars have been so bloody that we feel like hiding our faces for shame: it is because they have been so horribly selfish. We cannot forget that while we have always been quick to spring to our guns at the first sign of mobilization on the border, we have never found it difficult

to sit still and smoke our cigarettes in peace while tyrants were grinding whole peoples to pulp beneath their heels. We cannot forget that while we Christians have jumped at every chance to fight for our own freedom, we have had several chances to wage righteous wars for the oppressed Jew and missed them all. We cannot forget that while Armenia was bleeding we only laid aside our cigarettes long enough to adopt resolutions of sympathy and pass around the hat.

XIII

HOW FAR SHOULD A CHRISTIAN GO?

IT is easy to ask confusing questions about war. For example: Should a Christian go with his country into an unjust or unnecessary war? But questions of this sort are not so difficult as they usually appear. It all depends upon the point of view. When we look at America out of our own selfish hearts we usually see nothing but a huge organization quite apart from ourselves which we are at liberty to step into or out of at will. From this point of view it is easy to see that a Christian should not follow his country into an unjust or unnecessary war, and for a moment everything is clear; but the next moment it occurs to us that parting with one's country at the forks of the road is not an easy matter; and then all is confusion. It is as impossible to get a clear vision of a question of duty

as to war from a selfish point of view as it is to get a clear vision of a question of duty about anything else from a selfish point of view.

But there is another point of view. In the light of the teachings of Jesus America does not appear as a huge organization which one is at liberty to step into or out of at will. Clearly Jesus had no conception of a nation as a machine or corporation. I cannot conceive of him as thinking of a nation as anything more or less than a body of individuals bound together by the bonds of brotherhood. I have no doubt that he would recognize the right of neighbors to bind themselves together with an extra bond—the bond that ties a people into the separate bundle we call a nation. Certainly my obligations are stronger toward those whose fortunes may be affected by my conduct—those whom I have the power to help or hurt—than toward those who are practically beyond my reach. If all this is true the question whether I should go with my country into an unjust or unnecessary war resolves itself into the question

whether I shall stand by my brotherhood; and in the light of the teachings of Jesus such a question answers itself. Jesus does not ask us to endorse the conduct of our brothers, but he does ask us to stand by them. It is folly to say that if I take any part in an unjust war I thereby endorse injustice. A loving mother will stand by her criminal son to the end, but no one thinks of saying that she thereby endorses his crimes.

If I find that my family is drifting into an unjust fight I must oppose it with all the power I can command; but the moment the fight begins the situation changes, and my duty changes with it. My family is now in peril and I cannot forsake my loved ones in peril. Whether they are in the wrong or not is no longer the question: they are in peril and I must stand by them. I cannot put on superior airs and say that I am a member of the world-family and I cannot afford to have anything to do with petty neighborhood squabbles: my family is in peril and I must stand by my loved ones. I am not going to help the enemy. I am not going

simply to stand by and see that there is fair play. I am going to stand by and fight: and I am going to fight for my own people.

And as a member of the great American family my duty is just as plain. In the light of the teachings of Jesus it is impossible for me to conceive that it was wrong for America to enter the Great War. Matters had come to such a pass that it would have been a crime to stay out. To stay out would have been to violate our conscience; to shut our ears to a high moral appeal; to put our own comfort before every moral obligation just as the enemy had put military necessity before every moral obligation. But if America had been in the wrong, our duty as members of the great American family would have been just as plain. If my country should drift or blunder into an unjust war it is my duty as a Christian to act as a member of the family. I will not fight for the purpose of helping my country in an unjust cause, but I will fight all the same. I will fight to save my country. I will not forsake my country

in its hour of peril. I will no more attempt to evade my duty to my country by insisting that I am a world patriot and therefore my duty is to the world as a whole, than I will attempt to evade my duty to my family by insisting that I belong to the world-family and that therefore my duty is to the world-family as a whole.

The man who says he is too broad to love his own country better than other people's countries probably does not mean that he is too broad to love his own wife and children better than other people's wives and children, but that is what he says. World-patriotism has a high and virtuous sound, but it is only free-lovism run to seed. It is simply an extreme way of saying that in matters of love there are no boundary lines which one is bound to respect.

But a Christian must not only stand by his country in war. He must stand by his Master. He must uphold and magnify his will. He must insist that from beginning to end everything that is done, whether in America or "somewhere in

France," shall be done in harmony with his teachings.

We American Christians must unite in a mighty effort to fix the gaze of the nation upon the highest star in sight and to hold it back whenever it shows signs of yielding to the impulses of selfishness or sheer animalism.

We must turn the minds of the people to God's great purpose for the race and to their share in his plan to rescue human beings from every bond that holds them down and to give them a chance to achieve their divine destiny as men in the kingdom of God.

We must set our faces as a flint against all greed and hate and demand with all the force at our command that no eye shall be taken for an eye or tooth for a tooth.

We must remember and help America to remember that God has made no provision for letting down the moral law to meet the exigencies of war, and that whether martial law is declared or not the God of heaven and not that monster idol, Military Necessity, is still God over all.

We must insist that America has no right to use any severer force or any more force than is necessary to meet the highest moral ends in accordance with God's plans for the race, and that to go a step further is to infringe upon the prerogative of God himself. "Vengeance belongeth unto me: I will recompense," saith the Lord.

We must insist that as a father must not lay aside his fatherhood when he is called to punish his son, so men must not lay aside their brotherhood when they are called out to fight their fellow men. A true father does not punish his son with glee or hate, but with a breaking heart.

We must guard the moral manhood of the nation both at home and at the front. We must place proper moral restraint around our young men in the trenches and give them every moral and religious opportunity; and we must stand ready to oppose every unworthy proposal that may threaten to compromise or in any way injure the manhood of the nation at home.

We must keep our house swept clean in the sight of heaven. We must not do

our sweeping with the blinds shut, as did the old woman who insisted that when the sun was shining in the room it raised such a dust.

We must stoutly resist the popular notion that the greater the amount of bloodshed, the better. We must earnestly insist that bloodless measures shall be used wherever practicable, sternly set ourselves against all cruelty and do everything that human ingenuity and human compassion can suggest for the amelioration of all the horrors of war, both at the front and at home.

We must hearten the fighters at the front, comfort the grief-stricken at home, use the opportunity which the presence of death gives us to invite men to accept eternal life, give ourselves to works of relief and mercy, and cheer and inspire the world by our example of unselfish and loving service.

And we must pray. Of course we must pray. We must pray for our enemies, but not as hypocrites. We must pray for ourselves, but not as greedy vultures. We must pray for our country, not for mere

success in arms but for its triumph in the right. We must pray for peace, but as sane men and women, not as enthusiasts, remembering that our prayers will go no farther than our hearts, and that though we pray till doomsday we shall not receive the gift of real peace so long as we insist upon putting our own wills and plans in the way of the wills and plans of the Prince of Peace.

XIV

THE BUSINESS IMMEDIATELY BEFORE US

WE had just begun to dream that the world had gotten far enough along to abolish war, and we were seriously thinking of taking our swords to the smith to be turned into plowshares, when the awful shock came and woke us up. After that we did not know what to think, except that our dreams were premature. That is, until the other day. The other day we succeeded in working our way through chaos to another conclusion. We decided that after all is said and done we shall still have use for our common sense—the kind of sense that will not let you throw away your gun while there are still fresh tracks of wild beasts in the forest. Hereafter it will take something more than the golden

dreams of the professional pacifist to assure us that there will never be another war, or that it is worth while to hope for a lasting peace so long as savagery and tyranny are allowed to run loose in the world.

I am glad that the war has done this much for us. I am glad that we have begun to realize that before peace can come the savage and tyrant must go. I am glad that we are at last convinced that it is not the part of wisdom to cover a slumbering volcano with roses and then sit down on the roses.

Surely this is something to be thankful for.

But it is not enough. What we need to realize just now is that it is not the part of wisdom to sit down at all. We cannot abolish either savagery or tyranny by ignoring it any more than by covering it. There must be a change deep down at the heart of things.

A lustful brute attempts to violate the sanctity of a home, and because the enraged husband has the audacity to throw himself in his way, jumps upon him and

tears him to pieces. A pious idealist might insist that the only Christian way to deal with such violent eruptions is to bid the monster go in peace with the assurance that his own home shall be accounted doubly sacred; but to the ordinary mind such a provision against future outbreaks does not seem altogether adequate.

When the German war god, in his fury at the Belgians for daring to throw their bodies in the way of his savage purpose to violate the sanctity of their homes, sprang upon them and tore them to pieces, there were idealists who suggested that the only Christian course to pursue was to bid the tyrant to go in peace with the assurance that he should suffer no harm, and that the sanctity of his own home would be duly guarded; but somehow—

But, as our friends the enemy would say, we have harped on that string long enough.

All the promises of the pious idealists to the contrary the world will never be safe from such eruptions until there has been a change deep down at the heart of things, and we might as well come to the

question that is immediately before us. What can we do while waiting for this change deep down at the heart of things?

What can we do as a nation?

As I have said, in the light of the Master's doctrine of individual responsibility it seems clear that he expects a nation to act exactly as the individuals who compose it ought to act. I should have no difficulty in deciding what course I should pursue if I were surrounded by savage neighbors. So long as savagery dominated the community my doctrine of "preparedness" would have few limits. I would do my best to live on friendly terms with all men, but I should neglect no means to prepare myself for the worst. I should not refuse to fortify my home because, forsooth, my wife was gentle and my children harmless. At the same time I should not stir up my next-door neighbor's bad blood by flaunting my preparedness in his face. I should not imagine that I could hasten the day of peace and safety by marching up and down my back yard an hour every day with my best gun on my shoulder and stopping now and then

to point it at my neighbor's window. I should not make faces at him or sneer at his children or dare him to kick my dog.

But I should keep my gun loaded. I should keep several guns loaded.

But the moment the community began to settle down to civilized ways I should begin to reduce my preparedness. I would remember that preparedness, even when it is not flaunted in the face of the enemy, is never soothing, and that if I would encourage peace I must be willing to meet it at least half way. And I should not stop when I had reduced my armament one half. As the community settled down to civilized ways I should go on selling off my guns and munitions, and I should keep on until one day when a mad dog came around I would discover that I didn't even have a superannuated pistol in the house.

Is that all I would do? No. As a Christian living in a community that was gradually settling down to civilization I should do my best to hasten the settling down process. I should try by neighborly ways to develop in the community a sense

of neighborliness. I should try to get people into the habit of thinking of the community as a brotherhood. In a thousand ways I should appeal to their slowly developing sense of moral manhood. I should not be content to bring them to a gentleman's agreement to live together as gentlemen: I should try to transform the community into a brotherhood—a primitive brotherhood such as that which exists among boys in every well-regulated community.

Watch a gang of fairly civilized boys. If a fellow gets out of humor and becomes obstreperous he is at once given to understand that he must "be good" or he will be put out of the game. If he refuses to be good they not only put him out of the game, but they warn him that if he continues to give trouble he will get a sound thrashing. And if he continues to give trouble they are as good as their word. But they don't go beyond their word. They don't jump on his stomach with their feet or grind their heels into his face. As a rule they only use such force as may be necessary to bring him

to the point where one is ready to be good.

Now a nation should act in the very same way. If it is the duty of every American who has a savage neighbor to fortify himself to the extent of his peril and no further, it is the duty of America to fortify itself against such savage neighbors as it may have to the extent of its peril and no further. If it is the duty of every American to try to bring his neighbors together on a fraternal basis, it is the duty of America to try to bring its neighbors together on a like basis. If our God-given sense of brotherly obligation demands that we should unite even in boyhood to force the disturbers of our peace to "be good" for the general good, it demands that nations (which are essentially brotherhoods) shall combine to force the disturbers of their peace to be good for the general good.

But it is hardly worth while for nations to try to get together on a brotherly basis if the followers of Jesus are not going to fall in with their Master's plan to get the race together on a brotherly basis. And

we are not going to fall in with this plan until we have rid ourselves of some illusions. We must at least get rid of this great American illusion which is always putting the cart before the horse and assuring us that if we will seek first the peace of our selfish dreams "all these things shall be added" unto us. We think that if we can only get the peace we are yearning for, brotherhood and all the other beautiful things of the spirit will come tumbling down from heaven into our laps. But the peace we are yearning for is not the peace that comes down from heaven. What we really want is not peace at all, but, as I have said, freedom from disturbance. We want an uninterrupted chance to make money and have a good time. We don't want to sit down to our cards at night with the unpleasant reflection that the game may be interrupted any moment by a shrieking shell bursting through the window and exploding at our feet. We don't want any disagreeable experiences. We don't want any zeppelins, submarines, bloody bandages, scare heads in the newspapers, calls to the front, extra

taxes, nerve-racking explosions or the sight of detached heads, arms and legs flying about in the air. We don't want any interruptions to Big Business, the existing order, our party program, good roads or "twin-sixes." The only thing about war that pleases us is the pretty Red Cross nurse. We don't like war: therefore we pray for peace. But we pray for our kind of peace.

God has never promised the world any such peace. He has never promised a peace that can be dropped down into our laps. He has never shown any desire to spoil his children by shielding them from disagreeable interruptions or by multiplying their chances for better investments and longer joy rides. The only peace he has promised is his own peace. And that kind of peace comes into our hearts and not into our laps. And it does not come in response to our call for a better chance to indulge our selfish appetites. It comes only when we have left the low depths where selfish cattle graze and have risen to the quiet heights of manhood in the kingdom of God. When the human race

arrives at the heights of spiritual manhood where men live and walk with God as their Father and with one and another as brothers, then we shall have peace within, and not until then may we be sure of uninterrupted peace without.

When that time comes outward peace will be a blessing, not a peril. . . .

I might as well admit just here that in the light of the teachings of Jesus I can see no sign of the millennial dawn in any of our plans for national peace, either pacifistic or militaristic. Somebody has quoted a wise mother as saying that about all we can do for our children is to tide them over until they can learn some sense. And that, it seems to me, is all we can hope to do through our national or international peace measures. At best we can only tide the world over from day to day until it learns some sense; in other words, until it reaches manhood. The elaborate plans we have made to enforce peace, whether by international agreement or by military preparedness, are only temporary contrivances, and it is our duty to accept

them not as solutions to the problem but as temporary bridges which give us our chance to lay deep foundations for the permanent structure that will follow by and by. All the preparedness measures which the human mind can conceive cannot convert nations into true brothers, nor can they even force them at all times to act like true brothers. You cannot organize nations into a true brotherhood: you can only organize them into an artificial brotherhood, which will go to pieces at the next unusual outbreak of savagery. And such outbreaks are liable to occur just so long as the world is content to develop the bodies and brains of men and leave their spirits to shrivel up and be blown away. Men may cross their hearts and swear themselves blue, but all the solemn pomp and circumstance of treaty-making will not make them keep a treaty if their spiritual vision is not sufficiently developed to discern the difference between a sacred promise and a scrap of paper. This does not mean that our peace measures are valueless: it only means that, as I have said, they are temporary bridges and we

must not risk too much weight upon them.

There is danger, indeed, that some of these temporary structures may fall by their own weight. The moment one's measures of protection from a lawless neighbor become conspicuous and irritating they cease to protect and become a peril. The moment a nation's preparedness reaches dimensions that make it conspicuous it is likely to become irritating, and a preparedness that is irritating may prove more perilous than no preparedness at all. It should not be forgotten that the custom of "pistol-toting" which was introduced as a peace measure had to be abolished as a peace measure.

XV

HOW CAN WE HASTEN THE DAY OF LASTING PEACE?

DREAMING of peace is like smoking a pipe: it soothes the nerves but it does not seem materially to alter the situation. We must have another pipeful before dinner. The world may smoke its peace pipe until the end of time and it will never be safe from war until something is done materially to alter the existing situation. And thus far only one plan has been offered which promises to make the necessary alterations. Our own plans, we must admit, do not go beneath the surface of things. The program of Jesus alone aims at the root of the matter. This program does not undertake to heal the ancient breach between the lion and the lamb by teaching the lion good manners; it goes deeper: it aims at changing the lion's nature. You can never be sure that the lion will not

eat the lamb until he shows a decided preference for straw. When you find him as the prophet saw him, eating straw like an ox, you will know the problem is solved. No lamb would suffer any uneasiness at the close proximity of a beast who ate straw like an ox.

But this is not all. It is a plan that works. We have not tried to work it very often or on a very large scale, but we have tried it enough to know that it will work anywhere and on any scale. We have tried it in all sorts of hearts and homes and communities that were torn with strife, and it has worked. I have seen Christ come into a storm-tossed heart and work his miracle of peace as wonderfully as he worked it that stormy night on Galilee. I have seen him work it on a storm-tossed home and turn a shrieking hell into heaven. I have seen him work it in a wild, strife-filled community and transform it almost overnight into a blissful haven of rest. There is no question as to its workability. It always works. The only trouble is, we so seldom work it.

That has been our trouble in all ages.

The most humiliating fact in history is that mankind as a whole has never shown any abiding interest in the problem of working out its own salvation. It has been very curious to see how far it could develop the horse, the cow, the dog, the canary, the rose, but it has never had any great curiosity to see how far it could develop a man. It has given much serious thought to the possibilities of sundry weeds and roots. It has manifested a commendable interest in the divine destiny of the cabbage. It has at times suffered no little anxiety over the potato's soul. But so far as history shows it has never lost a night's sleep over the future of the world's manhood. It has never been satisfied to develop a horse or even a cabbage half way, but it has always been content with the partial development of men. If a potato had an intellect and a spirit as well as a body, mankind would never rest until it had developed its intellect and its spirit as far as it had developed its body; but in the case of a man it is usually content if his body is developed to full size and his intellect to half size. The spirit

may go. There has never been a time when the race as a whole has been interested in the problem of bringing men to complete manhood—to the point where a man is a full grown man intellectually and spiritually as well as physically.

I have called this the most humiliating fact in history. Hardly less humiliating to a Christian, however, is the fact that although the followers of Christ have been in possession of his plan for the development of the manhood of the race for nearly two thousand years, there is not a country on earth today in which there are enough men of high moral power to preserve peace in great crises even within its own borders.

It is high time we were taking our religion seriously. If Christ has placed upon us the task of coöperating with him in the business of making men for his kingdom it is time we were settling down to our task. Our slowly awakening consciousness of national peril has transformed hundreds of American plants into plants for the making of munitions. What we are now needing is a rapidly awakening

consciousness of Christian responsibility that will transform every home, every church and every school in the land into a plant for the making of men.

There was a time when we loved to boast that every American home was a cradle of liberty and manhood. I am not sure that I know just what the average American home is today, but I find it difficult to think of it as a home at all. One has a lurking suspicion that it is a boarding house. And boarding houses, we know, are not cradles of liberty and manhood. As for our churches, one can hardly speak of them as a whole. Undoubtedly most of them were built as plants for the making of men, and undoubtedly many of them are still working at their original job; but one does not need to go to the statistics to discover that in recent years many more have been overhauled and equipped for other jobs. And as for our schools——

But one has no heart to talk about our schools. The greatest educational ideal the world ever knew was the American ideal, and until the Great Invasion our

universities and colleges were undoubtedly turning out more complete men—men who were developed spiritually as well as physically and intellectually—than all the universities and colleges of Europe combined. No nation ever had as many men of great moral power as America had in the last century. But the Great Invasion, in which Germany took possession of nearly all our great educational strongholds in a single night, and did it so quietly that most people never knew what happened—the Great Invasion changed all that. It is true there are many little colleges and a few big ones which are still magnifying the ancient ideal with all their ancient zeal and devoting their entire equipment to the business of making men by education—not mere instruction, which only reaches the intellect, but education, which develops the whole man;—but most of the captured institutions no longer show any great enthusiasm for either education or men. They are no longer content to put a boy on one end of a log and a Mark Hopkins on the other. One may say that it is because there are no longer

enough Mark Hopkinses to go round, which is true: but it is also true that they are no longer interested in the problem of making enough Mark Hopkinses to go round. They are no longer trying to develop men to the highest power according to the ancient American plan; they are trying to make machine men according to the German plan—tremendous machine men after the German ideal who can run tremendous machines after the German pattern. And they are making them—not men but machine men, built from the ground up for a single purpose and so completely specialized that only the particular faculty developed is recognized as the man, while all the rest is merely a hanger-on like a vermiform appendix.

We have put down the sacrifice of Belgium as the most horrible crime in modern history. It may be the most horrible, but it is not the most unnatural. The most unnatural crime in modern history is the sacrifice of German manhood to the unbridled ambition of the German autocracy. Led on by its inordinate thirst for world-power the German government deliber-

ately turned its people from the task of developing their spiritual manhood—something which could only hinder its program instead of helping it—and undertook to convert them into machines such as it could use to the best advantage in the achievement of its ambition. For generations the German universities in their efforts to make out of their students bigger and better machines to meet the government's demands, systematically sacrificed the spiritual to the material as one would prune a tomato vine down to within an inch of its life to produce an enormous tomato. We used to wonder at Germany's extraordinary intellectual vision. Since the Great War began we have been wondering at her equally extraordinary spiritual blindness. But there is nothing amazing in either: you cannot gain the whole world, or the kind of vision that is necessary to gain it, without losing your own soul. It was as natural that Germany should gain its marvelous intellectual vision at the expense of its spiritual vision as it is for one end of a seesaw to go up while the other comes down.

Heaven forbid that we should gloat over this horror of a great darkness which has fallen upon those who hate us; but may Heaven forbid that we should continue to follow in their steps and thus invite upon ourselves the same terrible fate.

I have recently read somewhere that a college professor, who modestly leaves you to infer that he is not a religious man, has written a book to show that nearly all the best equipped professors in our larger colleges are agnostics. I am not disposed to believe that he has proved his point or can prove it, but it is somewhat disconcerting to reflect that we have professors in American colleges who can persuade themselves that the prevalence of agnosticism in their profession is a matter of such pride as to warrant its publication in book form. Agnosticism may be only an intellectual attitude, but everybody except the agnostic knows that it is not a sign of moral power. No man begins to make any progress toward spiritual manhood until he can stiffen his knees and hold up his head and affirm something. He need not say the whole creed, but he must be-

lieve in something. He must believe in something other than himself. . . .

After all is said and done the fact remains that the only hope of lasting peace among nations is a lasting peace among individuals, and experience has taught us that the only hope of a lasting peace among individuals is the peace which results from harmony with God. If this is true our path of duty is plain. We must stop dreaming over our peace-pipes and get up and go to work to bring men into harmony with God. And we must do our work according to Christ's own plan. We must coöperate with him in his great program for rescuing human beings from the bondage of animalism and lifting them up to the heights of spiritual manhood where (their spiritual eyes being opened) they will recognize their true place and destiny and will fall in step with God as their Father and with one another as brothers.

This and this alone is the solution to our problem.

I do not mean to say that the present

war is not important. It is tremendously important. But we might as well face the truth: its value is going to depend upon the use we make of it. Twenty years from today we may be able to say that it was worth a hundred times more than it cost; but we may have to say that it was worth a hundred times less. War is too big a price to pay for a draw game that will leave the world where it was before. It would be better—far better—to burn up all the money and flesh and blood we are going to spend on it at once and be done with it than go on with the present horror if we are not going to get anything more out of it than a mere artificial peace that will affect only our material interests. We cannot afford such a horror for mere material advantage of any sort. The game is not worth the candle. And certainly we cannot afford to tramp up and down the world hunting savagery and tyranny until we have soaked the earth with our blood if the hunt is going to end while these beasts are still roaming the forests. War is no longer a sport. It is the biggest sacrifice we can make of

anything we have a right to part with, and Heaven knows we cannot afford to pay such a price for anything that is superficial or temporary or only of material benefit. We must demand something lasting, and that means we must demand something spiritual. The only way we can get out of this war what we are putting into it is to use it as an opportunity for spiritual enrichment. We must make it a part of Christ's great plan for eternal peace. We must turn with scorn from every selfish impulse and cast ourselves into the breach for God and humanity, resolved that every law of God which tyrants are trampling under their feet shall be rescued and exalted in the earth, and that every oppressed human being within our reach shall be set free and lifted up and given a chance to achieve the highest end of his being.

And this means that we must go back not only to the program of Christ but to Christ. Not to the Christ of our selfish dreams; not to the Christ of our sentimental fancies; not to the Christ of our

literal interpretations, but to the Christ—the Christ of the Cross.

It is only in the light of the face of Christ—Christ, the hero; Christ, the champion of the oppressed; Christ, the ideal and hope and inspiration of our manhood; Christ the fountainhead of our compassion; Christ the lover of men and the hater of hate and greed and selfishness and tyranny and all the chains that deprive men of the chance of manhood—it is only in this light that we can hope to find our divinely appointed path through this horror of a great darkness.

Let us go back to Christ. It may be that in the light of his face we shall see how far we have missed his spirit and how little sincerity and how much of selfishness there has been in our prayers for peace. It may be that he will fill our hearts with his own compassion for the oppressed and his own indignation against the oppressor that will never let us rest with the cry of bound and bleeding humanity in our ears. It may be that in his presence we shall learn to hate the smell of warm blood upon the sword of the ty-

rant at least as much as we have been hating to hear about blood in this terrible war against tyranny. It may be that he will put into our hearts his own love for humanity—a love so broad and deep that we can love our enemies with humility and not irritate them to vengeance by thanking God that we are not as they are. It may be that he will open our eyes to a vision that will keep us from consuming our lives in the making of baubles and turn us back with an unquenchable enthusiasm to our divinely appointed task.

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